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Life in our villages. social capital in rural areas

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The Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP at a glance

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP at a glance

Summaries of 16 SCP research projects in 2008

Translated from the Dutch by Julian Ross



The Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP
The Hague, March 2009

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP was established by Royal Decree of March 30, 1973 with the following terms of reference:

- a. to carry out research designed to produce a coherent picture of the state of social and cultural welfare in the Netherlands and likely developments in this area;
- b. to contribute to the appropriate selection of policy objectives and to provide an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the various means of achieving those ends;
- c. to seek information on the way in which interdepartmental policy on social and cultural welfare is implemented with a view to assessing its implementation.

The work of the Netherlands Institute for Social Research focuses especially on problems coming under the responsibility of more than one Ministry. As Coordinating Minister for social and cultural welfare, the Minister for Health, Welfare and Sport is responsible for the policies pursued by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research. With regard to the main lines of such policies the Minister consults the Ministers of General Affairs; Justice; Interior and Kingdom Relations; Education, Culture and Science; Finance; Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment; Economic Affairs; Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; and Social Affairs and Employment.

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Preface

During the 1960s, politicians in the Netherlands began to take an increasing interest in the welfare of the population. This heightened interest also created an increased need for information: facts and figures on how people lived, on social trends, and on the changes taking place in society. This development coincided with the increasingly prevalent ideas at that time about the need to base policy decisions on sound scientific knowledge, and it was from this basis that the Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP was founded in 1973.

As a scientific institute, the SCP supplies information and advice covering the whole spectrum of government policy. The SCP employs a staff of approximately 100 people, most of them scientific researchers, sociologists, political scientists, social geographers, economists and legal specialists.

The Office is headed by a Board made up of Professor Paul Schnabel (General Director) and Rob Bijl, Ph.D. (Director).

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research supplies central government with information on the Dutch welfare state. For more than 30 years, the SCP has been charting developments in the daily lives of the Dutch population: work, income, health, education, social security, housing, culture, how they spend their time and their opinions on a whole range of subjects. The SCP also shows how government policy does or could influence these aspects. The SCP is an interdepartmental scientific institute which carries out independent research and issues recommendations on the basis of that research, both on request and on its own initiative. It publishes these recommendations in advisory reports aimed at the government, parliament and the heads of government departments. Its publications are also an important source of information and advice for leading professionals and civil servants in the public sector, as well as for scientists and members of the academic world. In addition, the SCP staff contributes to the public and scientific debate through articles, lectures and interviews.

The SCP reports regularly in a variety of publications on the living situation of the Dutch population. Among the aspects covered are the health status, education level, labour market participation rate, housing situation, disposable income and leisure time utilisation of various sections of the population such as older people, young people, women, the disabled and members of ethnic minorities.

The reports also look at the take-up of government provisions by these groups, and at the effects of various government measures on that take-up.

The opinions of the Dutch population on social, ideological and political topics are monitored through surveys. The SCP also monitors the behaviour patterns of the population by carrying out studies of how the Dutch spend their leisure time and of their use of amenities and takeup of provisions.

Based on this research, the SCP publishes reports on a wide variety of social themes such as the division of tasks between men and women, social cohesion, participation in cultural life, safety and information technology.

Each year, SCP publishes around 50 reports. This book contains extensive summaries of a selection of just sixteen recent publications which provide a good impression of the kind of research carried out by SCP and the many social themes that SCP covers in its research projects.

This book offers the reader a varied cross-section of summaries of our research projects in areas such as the daily life of ethnic minorities, school dropout, monitoring elderly policy, part-time working in the Netherlands, the presumed and actual effects of social safety policy, trends and problems regarding informal caregiving, governance in primary and secondary education, public interest in cultural websites, and many more topics.

All SCP publications are posted in full on the Internet at www.scp.nl. The website also contains information on the SCP itself, as well as on its databases and research questionnaires. The site even allows users to compile their own tables. Part of the website is available in English.

Rob Bijl
Paul Schnabel
(Board of directors)

Relative engagement¹

Studies in social cohesion

Paul Schnabel, Rob Bijl and Joep de Hart

Social cohesion. It is a topical theme in the social debate and, under the motto 'working together, living together', forms the thread running through the Coalition Agreement of the fourth Dutch government under Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende. Everyone knows more or less what is meant by social cohesion; but if we try to define it or want to carry out research into how it manifests itself in social reality, it turns out to be a very difficult concept to pin down.

Social cohesion is not easy to measure because it is itself used as a measure. Social cohesion is something that always seems to be absent or in short supply. What is the reality as regards social cohesion? In 15 studies, the staff of the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP show how social cohesion is given form in families, neighbourhoods, associations and churches, but also in politics and education, on the labour market and among ethnic minorities. The associations in which people engage in their free time and their contacts via the Internet are also explored.

Social cohesion is one of the fundamental notions, or 'unit ideas' of sociology. However, while the question of what binds society together could be seen as possibly the most important question to be addressed by sociologists from the beginning, the classical figures of the discipline are unable to provide a clear and detailed definition of what social cohesion actually means. Rather, social cohesion serves as a kind of 'sensitising concept', a general perspective from which reality is approached and observations made. The general concerns about social cohesion which are manifest in policy and politics today are also seldom accompanied by a definition of precisely what is understood by the term. This has led some to regard it as no more than a label for topics which happen to be high on the political agenda at a given moment in time, whereas others dismiss it as a 'quasi-concept' on account of its conceptual vagueness. Social cohesion is in fact not alone as a term whose precise meaning is difficult to pin down; it is a property it shares with many other terms, such as 'community', 'social exclusion', 'cultural identity' and 'love'.

It is a topic that intrigued the founding fathers of sociology, for whom a vague sense of crisis was also a factor in the background. As in many modern discussions, the interest in social cohesion was fuelled by a sense that that cohesion was in danger of breaking apart. That is undeniably the case in Durkheim's *De la division du travail social*, one of the texts which laid the foundations for modern sociology. Then, the central theme were the steps marking the transition from the pre-modern to the industrial society (urbanisation, mechanisation, mass migration, impoverishment, alienation, bureaucratisation, new social ties and roles). Today, other issues also give rise to concern, such as frictions among ethnic groups living alongside each other, secularisation, political distrust, the rise of the information society, privatisation and globalisation. But in both cases, those concerns are directed to a large extent towards the perceived loss of the binding power of social institutions and familiar forms of community, of moral clarity and a sense of community.

Much of the present-day concern about social cohesion is fuelled by the impression that the social dynamic has been undermined in a number of respects; that the postmodern human being has become morally capricious and focused on consumerism; that, like a restless nomad, he constantly seeks new sources of inspiration and displays behaviour which is almost impossible to predict; that he attaches great importance to his uniqueness and seeks to avoid being ensnared in traditional social networks and categories.

Although considerable efforts have been made since the days of the classical figures to strip social cohesion of its moral and ideological connotations, the concept has remained highly normatively charged in the social debate. It is almost always associated with positive qualities, such as making unselfish gestures on behalf of others, empathy, altruism, a sense of belonging, etc. It would seem that there can be no such thing as too much social cohesion. Yet the effects of social cohesion are ambiguous; more social cohesion does not always mean that a society overall is better off. How the effects of social cohesion should be appraised is among other things a question of scale: individual social skills can only be used for individual benefit; the favourable effects at group level may be accompanied by negative effects at individual level, for other groups, or for society as a whole. Group pressure and social control may be so strong that individuals see it as undermining their freedom of choice. Social cohesion can make solidarity with others highly selective. The greater the internal cohesion and integration within a given group, the more strictly its boundaries will be demarcated and patrolled. A high level of trust between the group members ('insiders') is often accompanied by distrust of outsiders. Strong internal social cohesion is often connected with thinking in terms of like-minded people and outsiders, giving rise to hostile perceptions of other groups. The idea of 'society' can degenerate into a closed sense of sticking together, like-mindedness and *esprit de corps* which is dominated by cliques and clannishness. Social cohesion can then become something that is dominated by a strong inward focus, accompanied by a desire by insiders to shut

themselves off from society at large and to apply group norms which are at odds with what is regarded as correct in the surrounding society. Examples include nepotistic relationships, drug cartels, terrorist organisations, youth gangs, groups exercising far-reaching social control that is perceived as taking away liberties, and sectarian groups which observe society only via the arrow slits of their narrow thinking. Social cohesion can thus work against social cohesion and strong ties between people can become dysfunctional from the perspective of society as a whole; they can for example cut off certain groups from flows of information and hamper the integration or dissemination of technological innovations. The more dense networks become, with more internal social cohesion, the more openness they lose.

Many of the above comments could also be ranked under what has been described since the 1980s as 'social capital', a notion that rapidly became popular following publications by Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam. The interpretation of the concept by the American political scientist Putnam is especially relevant in relation to the theme of this report. According to Putnam, social capital refers to the relationships between people (friends, neighbours, strangers), social networks and the ensuing reciprocal norms and trust in others. It is concerned with the degree of 'socialness' and the cooperative capacity of groups. Social capital is instrumental; it facilitates coordinated joint action in order to solve problems and thus fosters the efficient functioning of a community or political system. According to Putnam, networks and forms of civic engagement in which participants interact intensively on an equal footing (horizontal interaction) are especially associated with the building of social capital. The reason is that this interaction creates a favourable setting for the development of reciprocity norms and mutual trust, which in turn foster interpersonal cooperation. By contrast, Putnam argues that vertical networks, characterised by hierarchical and dependent relationships, are more likely to have a negative effect. What Putnam describes as secondary networks or associations also strongly favour the creation of social capital. These are forms of social organisation which encompass broad sections of the population and whose members meet on a more or less regular basis, for example in clubs and associations.

Putnam uses the terms 'bonding social capital' and 'bridging social capital'. Bonding social capital reinforces the exclusive collective identity of a group, emphasising the homogeneity of the group and the loyalty of its members. The bridging variant extends beyond the group boundaries, embracing ties with other groups and bringing together people from differing social or demographic backgrounds. If social capital is to have a positive impact on society in a broader sense (more safety, economic prosperity, more effective public administration, social mobility, etc.) and genuinely function as a public good, both types of social capital are needed. At individual level there is a need for integration in social networks and community ties as well as ties and networks which connect people to individuals, groups and institutions outside their own community. At macro-level this implies a synergy between

state and society, between public administration and the civic initiatives that are developed within civil society.

For the purposes of this publication, social cohesion is defined as, ‘the degree to which people give expression in their behaviour and perception to their commitment to social ties in their personal lives, as citizens in society and as members of the community’. This provides a concise summary and takes as a starting point the things that are regarded as important in almost all modern approaches to social cohesion: the social engagement of citizens, their mutual solidarity and their degree of connectedness to the greater social whole. Related to this are other aspects, such as shared norms and values, a sense of collective identity and loyalty to the political system. Social order and social control are also integral aspects, as are integration, combating exclusion, a willingness to bridge social differences, vital social networks and social capital.

The following chapters look at each of these elements. The cultural component is an important theme in developments in morality, citizenship education, leisure activity and the social orientation of minorities and national identification. Social capital is discussed, both as a condition for and an effect of social cohesion, via associational life, neighbourly relations, informal help networks, social relationships of minorities, social contacts via digital channels and participation in religious groups. Aspects of modern citizenship and political legitimisation are discussed in the exploration of the views of the population on Dutch society and the instilling of a sense of social responsibility and citizenship via schools. Social exclusion is the central theme in a discussion of the concerns about ‘ethnic schools’ and risk groups in the labour market; social control features in the analysis of the conditions for safety.

Social cohesion in public opinion

This chapter describes the diverse opinions which say something about how loyal the Dutch feel to their society, their social trust and their perceptions of normative cohesion.

Compared with other Europeans, the Dutch show little in the way of a sense of pride and national and local bonding, but do display great trust in others and in social institutions. The Netherlands is evidently not a country characterised by a great sense of bonding, at least on the basis of the feelings surveyed (the situation changes when it comes to international sporting events). People do not like to see themselves as part of a national herd, or are inclined to regard things such as pride as narrow-minded and chauvinistic. Compared with the inhabitants of other EU countries, the Dutch do however express considerable concerns about the willingness of people to help each other. The respondents in the survey were presented with a choice between selected concerns, and it is possible that the concerns about solidarity in the Netherlands came to the fore mainly because public opinion at the time (end of

2006) suggested that the biggest problems faced by other countries (unemployment, living costs and pensions) had been solved in the Netherlands. Compared with that time, the views of the Dutch subsequently became rather more pessimistic about the development of norms and values. From 1970 to the end of the 20th century, public opinion on behaviour and morals declined steadily; and from the start of the 1990s the increasing moral self-assurance also came to an end. Public opinion now again increasingly recognises that the distinction between good and evil is difficult to make because of the many different views and the rapid changes in them. Based on trends in participation in voluntary work, there is little reason to assume a substantial decline in solidarity and the sense of community in the Netherlands. Despite this, the idea that 'people' have less and less time for each other is widespread.

We then looked at differences between different groups in the population: if we look at the cohesion aspects of bonding, trust and normative integration, are there certain categories which are positive or negative across the piece? This was found not to be the case. Based on a long series of personal and group characteristics, we were able to explain the variation in views to only a very limited extent, and even then the results differed depending on the cohesion aspect under consideration. For example, education level was found to be associated with marked differentiation for social trust, but proved not to be significant for views on social relations in the neighbourhood. Personal social isolation and degree of urbanisation of the residential setting are of great importance for views on the neighbourhood, but have little or no bearing on people's views on norms and values.

Associational life and civil society

Civil society occupies the area between the private sphere of citizens on the one hand and the market and politics on the other. Civil-society organisations create a bond between citizens. Several authors assume that these bonds engender individual learning effects, such as mutual trust, a tendency towards cooperation, solidarity and other attitudes which help promote social cohesion and bonding between citizens. Civil-society organisations not only bring together diverse groups of citizens, but also connect those citizens to politics and the government. They can for example contribute to cohesion in society and political integration. Cohesion should not be confused here with harmony. Civil-society organisations defend specific interests and represent differing visions of the general interest. In doing so they fuel the public controversies and political conflict that are the essence of a democratic society. Sometimes, these organisations will also contribute to a heightening of social oppositions and conflicts in which there is no guarantee that polarisation will ultimately contribute to a more comprehensive integration of interests. In this chapter we look at the contribution made by civil society to social cohesion. That contribution encompasses both internal effects (mutual bonding of citizens who are members of a civil-society organisation) and external effects (bridging ties between an organisation and the outside world).

International comparative research suggests that many people in the Netherlands are organised into associations and other civil-society organisations, but that their level of activity in those organisations is modest. Membership numbers grew between the end of the 1970s and the 1990s; although the survey findings vary widely depending on the questions put, the figure still lies between 50% and 80%. Although there has been a limited fall in membership rates since the 1990s compared with the rest of Europe and compared with the situation in the Netherlands a few decades ago, the level is still high. If we take the reasonably stable figures for participation in voluntary work as a basis, we can also not conclude that the intensity of the ties between citizens and organisations has reduced. We have however established that some sectors where personal contact is important (churches, women's organisations and political parties) have shrunk in recent decades, while sectors where contacts between members and donors are less important (consumer organisations, nature and environmental organisations, health funds) have grown. This suggests that organisations with a traditional associational structure are less in line with the spirit of the times than organisations which operate mainly through mailing lists and the media.

It is not however the case that associational life has entered a terminal decline, because against shrinking women's organisations, for example, there is growth in organisations in the sports and recreation sector, where offering a local associational life is the primary activity (e.g. the athletics federation (*Atletiekbond*) and the hockey federation (*Hockeybond*)).

At the meso-level of associational life, a number of trends can be observed which offer scope for temporary and light forms of engagement. The spread of digital associational life, democratisation and local private initiative (on an ad hoc basis and under the banner of the national parent organisation) are trends which do not necessarily make associational life more intensive, but which do offer more people the opportunity to be active in a relatively low-threshold way. These trends mean that a larger group of people become actively involved – albeit often temporarily and to only a modest degree – in a national organisation. As a result, civil society is still important for the internal cohesion of organised groups.

Civil-society organisations have begun to raise their external profile in recent decades, and are today more engaged in influencing politics, the administration and the public debate. They also seek to serve a diversity of target groups, including people from vulnerable groups, and to connect circuits at different geographical levels. This external focus and the function as a bridge-builder supports the image of civil society as a deliverer of outwardly focused social cohesion. This is important for the cohesion of society as a whole.

Social cohesion as a building block for safe neighbourhoods

The importance of creating a safe residential environment has increased greatly in recent years; there is general agreement on the need to reduce levels of crime, nuisance and perceived lack of safety. People living in the cities, in particular, are concerned about lack of social safety: they are more often confronted with crime and generally feel less safe than people living in non-urban areas. Accordingly, the government's urban policy devotes a good deal of attention to increasing both objective and subjective safety. Improving the quality of the residential environment is a core thrust of the joint safety programme 'Towards a safer society' (*Naar een veiliger samenleving*) by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) and the Ministry of Justice, and this is continued in the project 'Safety begins with prevention' (*Veiligheid begint bij voorkomen*) put forward by the present government. One of the prominent objectives of the urban renewal policy of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment (VROM) is also improving liveability.

One of the dominant ideas, both within and outside government policy, is that social safety can be increased by strengthening the social cohesion within neighbourhoods. One way of seeking to achieve this is to create a more balanced population profile within residential neighbourhoods. Objectives such as these are applied mainly for urban districts with relatively poor housing and a population that is socially and economically disadvantaged compared with the rest of the city. This chapter analyses the plausibility of the idea that social cohesion functions as a building block for safe neighbourhoods.

Social safety has improved in the Netherlands in the last decade, both nationally and in the major cities. Despite this positive trend, however, certain neighbourhoods remain relatively unsafe. The housing stock in these neighbourhoods is also often in a relatively poor condition and/or the population are so few economically disadvantaged compared to the rest of the city.

Many initiatives have been developed aimed at increasing safety in these neighbourhoods. Many of these measures are aimed at increasing social cohesion – not surprising, given that research suggests that various dimensions of social cohesion are related to social safety. There is still a great deal of uncertainty regarding the mechanisms underlying this relationship, but what is in any event clear is that mutual trust and (informal) social control are the important aspects of social cohesion which help increase social safety. At the same time, we see that the social processes that take place between residents have relatively little influence. Individual characteristics of residents are much more important in explaining the level of social safety in a neighbourhood than the characteristics of that neighbourhood. It would therefore be better to temper the expectation that strengthening social cohesion could increase social safety.

The fact that it is mainly the characteristics of the residents themselves which help explain the level of social safety in neighbourhoods does not mean that measures to improve the neighbourhood are pointless. One of the most important instruments for increasing social cohesion in neighbourhoods is the creation of greater diversity in the housing stock through restructuring. We have shown that there are indeed (albeit minor) social effects from such restructuring. However, it would seem that improvements in a neighbourhood (fewer disadvantaged people and more social safety) result more from the fact that residents move to other neighbourhoods than from increased social cohesion. Social problems are in other words dispersed to other parts of the city rather than being reduced per se. Nonetheless, it may be concluded that, especially in neighbourhoods where social safety has deteriorated to an unacceptable level, restructuring could make a positive contribution.

Good fences make good neighbours

The countryside is often seen, not least by those who live there, as an exception to the rule that local ties are of little importance. In research, the countryside is in fact regularly used as a reference category against which the new – i.e. urban – forms of community are compared. This is however not entirely justified. Time marches on in the countryside, too, and rural social life bears almost no resemblance to the traditional, introspective village communities of the past. This chapter looks at the interaction between neighbours in the Dutch countryside. How far do those contacts extend? Is there a genuine sense of community or do people in the countryside, like those in the towns, select the neighbours with whom they interact?

Rural neighbours have virtually lost their dependence on each other, but do nonetheless need each other. Most neighbours are not individualistic singletons. They want to feel at home and safe in and around their home, and contacts with neighbours contribute to this. The mutual engagement between neighbours in the countryside often manifests itself in collective behaviours. Neighbours organise parties or discuss what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Neighbours are stakeholders in the same public space, and act on the basis of a realisation that they benefit from good relations. In addition, a good deal of the engagement between neighbours springs from the idea that a good neighbour will be concerned about his neighbours. If someone is in need of urgent help or is no longer in good health, neighbours are often willing to do something for them. This often stems from individual initiative, but is something different from personal sympathy.

However, people living in the countryside also want to feel free. Their home is their private domain and they do not want too much interest from their neighbours. Relations between neighbours are constrained in many ways in the countryside as well as in the towns. Precisely where the boundary lies between interference and interest is sometimes unclear, and this can lead to tension. However, and generally shared principle is that people should be allowed to make their own choices and that people

do not wish to spend too much time with their neighbours. In the countryside, too, the neighbourhood community has to compete with the world outside. Work, contacts with friends and family outside the neighbourhood and other outings all take place at the expense of time spent in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, relations between neighbours in the countryside are significantly closer than in the cities. Where relations between neighbours in many urban neighbourhoods vary between anonymity and public familiarity, public familiarity is the minimal norm in the countryside. New neighbours shake hands during the moving in process, often share a drink and subsequently greet each other when passing in the street. This familiarity makes many rural dwellers feel comfortable and also makes it possible for neighbours to call each other to account about things that affect their own interests. In this way it contributes to the liveability of the neighbourhood.

Why is it that relations between neighbours in the countryside are relatively close-knit? There are a number of possible explanations for this. Historical cultural traditions may play a role in the social structure; in the eyes of many rural residents, the Catholic Church in the south of the country, the pietistic Reformed religious movements in the central 'Bible Belt', the traditional 'good neighbourliness' (*noaberschap*) in the east of the country and other local traditions and old agricultural ties constitute the foundations of a strong level of engagement between neighbours. However, if traditions are not in harmony with other aspects of life, for example of people are too busy, they quickly become interpreted differently. And new residents may then be happy to take on some of the local traditions, but are likely to impart their own pragmatic slant to them. Traditions alone can thus not fully explain the close-knit relations between neighbours in the countryside.

Another explanation is that the rural population is generally more homogeneous than the urban population. There are virtually no ethnic minorities living in the countryside and many residents fall into the same middle class socio-economically. A homogeneous neighbourhood is more likely to engender a sense of community than a heterogeneous neighbourhood; tensions between neighbours frequently stem from differences in lifestyle.

In the eyes of some rural dwellers, the population of their neighbourhood is rapidly becoming more heterogeneous due to the arrival of newcomers. On the other hand, there appears to be no evidence of an unbridgeable gap. The arrival of newcomers does however lead to a clear shift in norms and a reduction in the intensity of contacts. New residents do not always adopt the prevailing norms and do not always feel inclined to adapt.

Finally, the close-knit neighbourly relations in the countryside could be the result of the low population density. Since rural dwellers have relatively few neighbours, the neighbourhood is manageable in size. Those living in an isolated rural setting will

have few neighbours around them; people living in a street will have dozens. As a result, it is feasible for those living in rural areas to know all their immediate neighbours by name and to invite each other to parties, etc.. The low population density also means that rural dwellers have to rely fairly heavily on the few neighbours that they do have. Not surprisingly, arguments between neighbours occur more frequently in more densely populated neighbourhoods. Ironically enough, therefore, a greater geographical distance between neighbours may cause them to seek each other out for social contacts.

Family care

Social networks of family and friends offer help, advice, consolation and other emotional support. They are also a source of information and of requested and spontaneous advice. This is the positive side of the story, because social networks also correct and enforce desirable behaviour, and can thus feel oppressive. Attention in this chapter focuses mainly on one element of the support: the informal care provided by parents to their sick or disabled children and, conversely, the care provided by adult children to needy parents. Informal care is defined here as care which is provided to a needy person by one or more members of their immediate network, where the care provision stems directly from the social relationship and is not provided in the context of a caring profession or organised voluntary work.

In the European context, three forms of informal care can be broadly distinguished, in which primary responsibility lies respectively with the individual (Scandinavian model), the nuclear family (continental model) and the extended family (Mediterranean model). Only when these networks are unable to provide adequate support does the government step in. This will be more likely to happen in the Scandinavian model than in the Mediterranean model; Danes in particular are very reticent with regard to the support that the family ought to provide, whereas the Greeks see a pronounced role for the family. The Netherlands occupies a position midway between the Scandinavian and continental models.

Although there are theoretically wide differences in the role of the family between the different models, in practice the family plays an important role in the provision of support. In Europe, around 75% of informal care provided to people aged over 50 by someone outside their own household is provided by family members.

It is estimated that in 2008 approximately 300,000 people in the Netherlands provided care for their (chronically) sick or disabled child and approximately 1.3 million people provided care to their needy parents. Informal care for parents is thus at a lower level than in the Southern European countries, for example, but the figures give no grounds to underestimate the supporting role played by social networks in the Netherlands.

Providing informal care to a seriously ill or disabled child is a full-time job which is generally performed by one parent. These parents have learned to provide the care through practice and accordingly take on the often complex tasks which in other cases would be performed by health professionals. Although parents consider a completely natural to provide care for their vulnerable child, this is not always a free choice: their efforts are largely regarded as ‘usual care’ which means they often have no entitlement to support funded under the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act (AWBZ) or the Social Support Act (WMO). Many of these parents are heavily burdened, due in part to the onus of the care provision resting on their shoulders and to a lack of support, both from their social network and from health professionals. A fifth of them are actually overburdened, experience problems at home or at work and suffer deteriorating health. Providing the care takes so much time that many of them are no longer able to engage in other activities outside their own household. Social isolation is not far away in these cases.

It is not known whether families with a sick or disabled child shut themselves off from the outside world and therefore from their social networks, or whether they simply have no time to maintain their networks and therefore receive no support from them. Since providing care to a vulnerable child demands experience – even professionalism – in addition to an intimate relationship, it is perhaps also difficult for family and friends to take on the tasks performed by parents.

The care provided to parents is often shared by the children, especially daughters and daughters-in-law. This sharing of the caregiving means providing the support takes up much less time for each caregiver and is much less burdensome than providing help to one’s own children, for example. In addition, those providing care to parents much more often (have the possibility to) leave complex care tasks, which are also very burdensome, to professional caregivers.

The support does not stop when the parent is admitted to an institution, though the number of hours of care provided does reduce, mainly because the complex personal care and nursing tasks are carried out by the staff of the institution. Informal carers devote their time more to providing emotional support and, particularly, organisational and administrative help.

Despite the smaller amount of time spent on caregiving, providing informal care for parents living in an institution is no less burdensome than the care provided to parents living independently: a third of caregivers feel heavily burdened, while 10% feel overburdened. Although the burden of time devoted to providing help reduces, the emotional burden of caring for somebody with cognitive and behavioural disorders increases.

When women explain the reasons for providing informal care, they tend to use the word 'love'; men, by contrast, more often use the term 'duty'. They both mean the same thing: it is completely natural to care for your relatives and friends. Providing that care simply ensues from the bonds that exist within social networks.

Providing help strengthens these bonds. This applies not only for the bond between the caregiver and the care receiver, but also for the bonds between the different caregivers, for example brothers and sisters who share the care for their parents. Network members who are not directly involved in the caregiving also support the caregiver(s) by showing their appreciation. A large proportion (40%) of those caring for parents feel that the bond with family and friends has become stronger because they are providing informal care. This in turn strengthens the support for informal care within that network.

The large number of caregivers who feel heavily burdened or even overburdened by their care tasks is the most negative aspect of informal care. Their day-to-day lives are disrupted by having to provide care, and for some of them has actually become problematic. It is strange when this is compared with professional care, where legislation is in place governing working and rest times and other working conditions designed to prevent staff becoming overburdened. In the informal care circuit attention is rarely paid to this and there is no one who sets limits for people who are taking on too much.

Finally, the situation is not always ideal for children who jointly provide care to their parents. In some cases, disagreements arise about the division and performance of tasks, and there may even be conflicts about the need to admit the parent to an institution.

Citizenship education in schools

Social cohesion is an important theme in present government policy. Making citizenship education a statutory requirement for schools further underlines the socialising function of education. This statutory requirement came into force in February 2006. Citizenship is described as 'the willingness and ability to participate in the community and make an active contribution to it'. This chapter looks at how schools acquit themselves of this task in practice. It also explores the political and social engagement of young people.

How do schools themselves interpret active citizenship and social integration education?

Educational courses designed to prepare pupils for social cohesion are regarded as the most important: learning social skills, politeness and good manners, and assimilating basic values. Schools themselves report that they devote attention to this on a weekly basis. The school is also seen as an important place where these skills can be practised. There are marked differences here depending on the type

of school. In special secondary and primary education and in practical education, where many pupils and students have learning and behavioural difficulties, most importance is attached to social skills and interaction skills. Schools are also seen mostly as a place where pupils and students can practise these skills. Least importance is attached to 'knowledge of democracy' in the context of social and personal development in all school types; this may be because this subject is already covered in subjects such as history or social studies. Schools devote relatively little attention to familiarising students with other cultures and to religion and ideology. Most schools (more than 80%) have developed a policy on the implementation of this new social task. The nature of the student population and the identity of the school (its perspective on people and society) play an important role here. It is striking that primary schools almost never link the policy on social safety within the school (e.g. combating physical violence or logging incidents) to the formulation of targets for the delivery of citizenship education. It would seem that schools treat safety and citizenship as separate subjects.

In 2007 the idea of the 'social internship' was incorporated in the policy programme 'Working together, living together' (*Samen werken, samen leven*) developed by the government of Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende. The intention is that all secondary school students should learn more about society and should make an unpaid contribution to it. The government believes it is important that students should do something for others without remuneration; this will enable them to experience how rewarding that can be and also to learn that their efforts matter. Reflecting on their 'social internship' and discussing it in a group will also open up avenues for social and citizenship education. Moreover, the fact that students learn to come into contact with 'strangers' at an early age lays a basis for future voluntary work, according to the Ministry of Education. The exercise can therefore make an important contribution to social cohesion.

In principle, students look for their own placement, within or outside the school. The school plays a mainly supervisory and incentivising role and gives help to students who need it. The internship is being phased in between 2007 and 2011, from which year it will be a statutory requirement whose implementation will be monitored by the Education Inspectorate.

Education matters, at least at individual level

Figures on the social participation of young people suggest that they are less ego-centric and materialistic than is often believed. They spend just as much time doing voluntary work as older age groups, for example. The type of education they have followed (general or vocational) does have an influence here, and their education level plays a key role in their attitudes to democratic rules, different ideas and politics. Highly educated young people have a considerably stronger sense of citizenship

than those with a lower education level. Education thus appears to matter, at least at individual level.

Are the expectations concerning the contribution of education not too ambitious?

A great deal is expected from schools. Are those expectations not too ambitious? Is it not all too easy to assume that the school can play a substantial and effective role in promoting social cohesion? How much empirical evidence is there to support the idea of ‘learned young, never forgotten’?

Even if schools do have an influence on students’ thoughts and actions, that influence will always be limited, because the opinions, attitudes and orientations of young people have not yet fully crystallised when they leave school. It would therefore seem wise not to saddle schools with overly high expectations.

The requirement to provide citizenship education is hedged in with a number of dilemmas. For example, citizenship education has to compete with the teaching of language and arithmetic skills. The layered structure of the Dutch education system also affects the degree of citizenship education provided. Schools will in future be required to give a more detailed account of their performance in arithmetic and language, and the Education Inspectorate may be guided more by that in forming its opinion than it is at present. Because the contribution made by schools in the area of citizenship education is much more difficult to measure, the choice made by schools would appear to be fairly obvious: they are likely to focus their attention mainly on the higher standards in arithmetic and language teaching, possibly at the expense of a more cohesive and structural embedding of citizenship education. The simple reality is that teaching time is limited.

While it is true that layered education systems with a high proportion of junior and secondary vocational streams have a negative impact on the social integration of young people, there are also positive effects. Systems with a highly developed vocational education system, for example, have a positive impact on the labour market chances of school-leavers. These systems, in which employers are closely involved, must however avoid the danger of providing citizenship education in separate programmes. Meeting people who think differently is an important part of the socialisation process, and citizenship education should therefore preferably be provided to mixed groups of pupils and students from both vocational and general education. This will promote mutual communication and understanding between pupils with different social and cultural backgrounds.

Segregation in primary and secondary education

Primary and secondary education in the major cities is highly segregated along ethnic lines. Many pupils in the cities attend schools where they have little contact with peers from other population groups. We attempt in this chapter to describe

the potential consequences of this segregation in terms of social advancement and bonding (cohesion). What can we say to summarise the effects of segregation? What opportunities are there to reduce segregation in primary and secondary schools?

The understanding of the consequences of segregation is far from complete. A good deal of research has been carried out in the Netherlands into the consequences of segregation for pupil achievement in primary schools. The conclusion of that research is that 'ethnic schools' (i.e. schools where more than 50% of the pupils are of non-Western origin) do indeed have a negative effect on achievement, especially so in language and arithmetic. This 'ethnic school effect' is however limited; in the first place, it is not particularly large compared with the influence of pupils' individual backgrounds, and secondly it has reduced in recent years. The average educational level of parents also appears to have an influence, but here again the individual backgrounds of pupils are much more important. The conclusions by some American researchers regarding strongly negative effects of high concentrations of disadvantaged pupils therefore do not hold to the same degree for 'ethnic schools' or disadvantaged schools in the Dutch primary education sector.

Much less is known about the effect of segregation on student achievement in secondary schools. On the specific point of premature school dropout, a number of studies suggest a heightened risk at schools with a high concentration of non-Western ethnic minority students. The consequences of segregation for the mutual acceptance and perceptions between native and ethnic minority students is also relatively unexplored territory in Dutch education research. Mixing may have positive effects, as predicted by the contact hypothesis. However, the scarce research results do not point to uniform conclusions on the correctness of this prediction.

A comparable observation can be made about the consequences of segregated schools for citizenship education. It is likely that targets in the area of citizenship will be more difficult to achieve in segregated schools, though research to support this assumption is not available. Given the commitment to an education policy based on hard facts, it is remarkable how little is known about the effects of segregation.

Several local authorities have made attempts to curb segregation since the 1980s. Dispersal agreements between schools or double waiting lists were used in an attempt to promote balanced school populations. There are also a number of examples of successful parent initiatives. Based on the figures, however, not a great deal has been achieved across the full spectrum of the education system.

One problem is that, although segregation is generally considered undesirable, the various parties involved have difficulty in making concessions and accepting constraints. Many indigenous parents value the freedom of school choice and consider schools with a high proportion of ethnic minority pupils to be unsuitable for their

child. School boards generally regard combating segregation as one of the mainstream tasks of the school. However, it is difficult to expect 'ethnic schools' to refuse to accept ethnic minority pupils if these are not replaced by native pupils.

One possibility might be to more or less enforce dispersal. However, experiences in other countries suggest that this can actually have an adverse effect. If school choice is strictly limited to residential location, people will tend to move to 'whiter' areas. Forced dispersal based on ethnicity is moreover not legally tenable, but a socioeconomic criterion might provide an alternative. This would also fit in with the educational compensation policy of primary schools, which was recently amended to focus exclusively on the education level of parents. Given the uncertain benefits of mixing school populations, enforcement is a very heavy instrument to use. Voluntariness and support among stakeholders, as is the case with parent initiatives in creating mixed schools, are thus important and also leave the freedom of school choice intact. The downside is that the step from voluntary to non-obligatory is sometimes a small one.

In the cities, the 'representativeness principle' by definition sets limits on the possibilities for reducing segregation. If primary schools have to reflect the population profile of the neighbourhood in which they are located, quite a number of schools with high proportions of ethnic minority pupils will have to be exempted from the aim to increase mixing. The scope for dispersal is greater in more mixed neighbourhoods. In other localities the population profile will have to change through measures in relation to housing. In short, while mixing is not impossible, all in all the margins for a dispersal policy in primary education are not extensive.

In secondary education, broad-based school communities offer the best prospect for bringing together students from different population groups, though even here segregation between departments will remain. Since the end of the 1990s, however, broad-based school communities have more or less fallen out of favour. Given the negative image of pre-vocational secondary (vmbo) schools in the cities, parents of students attending senior general secondary (havo) or pre-university (vwo) schools are likely to show little enthusiasm for the merging of havo/vwo schools with narrow vmbo institutions to create new broad-based school communities. The existing broad-based school communities in the large cities sometimes already have difficulty in keeping up the standards of their havo/vwo departments.

It may be that the negative effects of segregation are greater in secondary schools than in primary schools. However, the opportunities for reducing segregation are much less there.

Social exclusion in the Netherlands and Europe

Reports about Dutch society in recent years often talk of an increase in oppositions, a growing polarisation between different groups. It is not difficult to find reports in the media about people's lack of respect for each other, about ethnic minorities who integrate insufficiently, about groups of citizens who do not adhere to the norms and values of Dutch society, about problem young people, about the emergence of an underclass, and so on. These examples relate mainly to the lack of cultural integration on the part of a section of the population. The current Balkenende government considers the situation so serious that a proposal was included in the Coalition Agreement to develop a Charter for responsible citizenship, setting out what the important and democratic norms and values are and what responsibilities the citizen has (Coalitieakkoord 2007).

The large amount of 'alarmist' reporting almost suggests that Dutch society is on the brink of breaking down. It implies social division and social exclusion of certain groups. Words of this tenor were also used in the 1980s when mass unemployment placed many people outside the employment process and created long-term benefit dependency. It was expected that this would lead to social and economic exclusion of these groups and to 'cultures of poverty', comparable with the situation in American ghettos. These fears of a social division proved unfounded at the time; this chapter explores the situation today.

Several dimensions can be distinguished within the concept 'social exclusion'. In our definition, the concept encompasses inadequate social participation, insufficient normative integration, material deprivation and insufficient access to basic social rights (such as adequate housing, health care and education). An international database (EU-SILC'06) enabled us to construct an index for three of these dimensions (excluding normative integration) for social exclusion. On the basis of this index the countries of Europe (plus Iceland) were compared. For the Netherlands, this comparison yielded a twofold conclusion. On the one hand, the Netherlands occupies a relatively favourable position alongside the Scandinavian countries: the Dutch are less socially excluded according to EU criteria. The Eastern European countries score the worst, followed by the Mediterranean countries. On the other hand the relative position of certain groups in the Netherlands is worse than in many other countries. This is especially the case for lone-parent families, the disabled and people in poor health. These groups are often excluded to a greater extent in the Netherlands than on average in most other countries. The relative position of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands in terms of social exclusion is also unfavourable in the Netherlands, as it is in the Scandinavian countries. The position of these groups deviate from the average for their country to the smallest extent in the Mediterranean and Eastern European countries; as a result, they do not constitute a specific risk group for social exclusion within their respective countries.

The Netherlands thus generally succeeds in combating social exclusion, but not to the same degree for groups with ‘unfavourable’ characteristics. These groups are still at some remove from the favourable general average in the Netherlands, especially when compared to most other European countries. In this sense, the social oppositions in the Netherlands are considerable. Somewhat reassuring in this regard is the fact that most of the risk groups have shrunk in recent years, a trend which is likely to continue. Provided no trend breaks occur, this is more likely to lead to a reduction than an increase in social exclusion.

The relatively favourable position of the Netherlands applies not only for social exclusion, but also for social cohesion. In this report we subdivided social cohesion into a cultural aspect (the degree to which people trust each other, or the level of social trust) and a structural aspect (the scope of social security). The Netherlands scores well on both aspects, coming in the region of the Scandinavian countries. Analysis of the relationship between social exclusion, social trust and the scope of social security reveals a strong correlation between them. A low level of social exclusion corresponds with a high degree of social trust and an extensive social security system, which in turn also show a strong mutual correlation. These findings offer no support for the ‘crowding out’ hypothesis, which posits that an extensive social security system has the (unintended) effect of leading to a reduction in social capital, a reduction in personal care relationships and informal networks. There is more support for the ‘reinforcement’ hypothesis formulated by us, which posits that social trust and an extensive social security system are mutually reinforcing. We are also inclined to include social exclusion in this mutual relationship. A high degree of social cohesion, in both a cultural and a structural sense, will lead to a low degree of social exclusion. Conversely, in a society where few people are socially excluded there will be an increase in mutual trust. The willingness to protect all citizens via an extensive system of collective social security will also be greater.

Included or excluded: a typology of the unemployed

Employment is important for individual well-being, but also for the cohesion of society as a whole. At individual level, paid work meets people’s economic and social-psychological needs. Work is not only a source of income, but also of development opportunities, self-respect and social contacts. According to the theory, people who are unable to work because of unemployment or disability miss out on these benefits, and therefore experience lower well-being than people who do perform paid work. The assumption that employment is an important principle underlying social integration also implies the converse, namely that not working leads to exclusion.

The central question addressed in this chapter is to what extent not working is associated with lower involvement in society. Negative opinions on the part of the unemployed about paid work, in combination with the absence of other expressions of social engagement, could suggest the existence of a group who do not recognise

work as a central cultural value and who perhaps even stand completely outside society. Recent figures suggest that there is indeed a group of people among those who have been registered at a Centre for Work and Income (CWI) as unemployed jobseekers for at least six months, who display a very low level of engagement, who have effectively withdrawn from society. Analyses suggest that approximately 18,000 unemployed jobseekers in the Netherlands fall into this category.

An important question here is of course whether this group who have effectively withdrawn from society can be (re)integrated into the mainstream. The figures show that they relatively often do not have a statutory duty to apply for jobs. Imposing such a duty would however in all probability affect only their jobseeking behaviour. If their negative attitudes to paid work remain unchanged, this could give rise to ritualism, with people looking for a job for the sake of appearances, but in reality attaching no importance to work. To the extent that they return to the jobs market, it is likely that in many cases the jobs would have little intrinsic value for those concerned, who could therefore easily fall back into unemployment.

A second possibility for (re)integrating this group would be to encourage them to engage in other forms of participation, such as voluntary work. This could eventually help them see the value of work, paid or otherwise. The fact that people do not participate in such activities on their own initiative, however, suggests that financial or other incentives would have to be employed.

The solution may lie more in answering the question of why this group displays little engagement. One possible explanation lies in the circumstances in which they live. For example, a quarter of those concerned are single parents, and it is plausible that their care tasks are the reason that they have little or no interest in paid employment or other forms of participation. It is important to ensure that the self-exclusion of this group does not become permanent. Existing measures are often directed towards facilitating the combination of work and care tasks. For this group of single parents, it may be necessary also to look at measures designed to restore the ties with the labour market in the longer term, after those care tasks have reduced.

Generally speaking, however, the fact that these people have turned their backs on the labour market will mainly be a consequence of their long-term unemployment: half of all this group have been unemployed for five years or longer. Preventing long-term unemployment would therefore appear to be the most appropriate means of combating this withdrawal.

The foregoing could create the impression that the picture with regard to the present-day unemployed is a sombre one. That impression would be incorrect: the vast majority of people who are registered as unemployed jobseekers with a Centre for Work and Income (CWI) endorse the established values in respect of paid employ-

ment or participate in society in some other way. Whether they fall into the category of those with a focus on work, socially engaged or alternative participants according to the typology constructed here, they can therefore be regarded as integrated members of society.

Social contacts of minorities and the relationship with social cohesion and socioeconomic position

Mixing different population groups is a popular aim, based on the idea that it could achieve two objectives: both bonding the groups concerned and raising their social status. Bonding refers to the degree to which ethnic minorities feel loyalty to the Netherlands; status-raising is about climbing the social ladder. The horizontal dimension of mixing refers to the sense of bonding, while the vertical dimension relates to social mobility, based on the idea that mixing could contribute to advancing the socioeconomic position of those concerned. This chapter explores how social contacts between the native and immigrant populations relate to social advancement and bonding. An interesting distinction can be made in this regard between the 'internal' and 'external' routes: is social advancement achieved through the use of social capital within the group (internal route) or social capital from outside the group (external route)? Hybrid forms are also possible, such as a high proportion of immigrant and native capital simultaneously (contacts both with members of one's own ethnic group and with the native population), or 'double bonding'.

This chapter explores the forms taken by social contacts between the ethnic minority and indigenous populations. The focus is on contacts in people's leisure time. Can 'double bonding' be observed, and what differences are there between and within ethnic groups? We also looked at the relationship between the nature of the contacts between the ethnic and native populations on the one hand, and cohesion and socioeconomic advancement on the other.

Current Dutch policy expects a great deal from interethnic contact. The government is afraid of a fragmented society, in which the different population groups are widely separated from each other. Promoting contacts between immigrants and the indigenous Dutch is one of the measures designed to make a positive contribution to cohesion. The scientific world is also showing great interest in social capital. Broadly speaking, much of the research suggests the presence of bridging social capital: contacts which bridge socioeconomic and ethnic dividing lines could make an important contribution to social mobility and social cohesion.

Against this background, in this chapter we examine the relationship between different types of ethnic minority networks on the one hand and social advancement and bonding (loyalty to the Netherlands) on the other. The networks are characterised by the differing degrees to which ethnic minorities interact with members of their own group and with the native population. A clear correlation was found

between maintaining contacts with the indigenous population and loyalty to the Netherlands, operationalised by us as a positive attitude to the Netherlands and the Dutch. Members of ethnic minorities who interact mainly with the native population and have little contact with their own ethnic group more often feel Dutch, feel more at home in the Netherlands, have more positive feelings about the indigenous Dutch and more often see the Netherlands as a hospitable country which offers opportunities to immigrants. There is a fairly strong correlation between these indicators and this type of contact.

There is also a positive correlation between bonding and ethnic minorities who combine frequent contacts with the native population with frequent contacts with members of their own ethnic group (double bonding), though this correlation is less pronounced than for ethnic minorities who predominantly interact with the native Dutch. Ethnic minorities who mainly interact with their own ethnic group or who have few contacts either with their own group or with the native population are clearly distinct from ethnic minorities with different networks; they more often identify with their own ethnic group, feel less at home in the Netherlands, feel less accepted and have less positive feelings towards the indigenous Dutch.

Contacts with the native population thus correlate positively with a sense of bonding. This mainly implies support for the traditional assimilation thesis, though the thesis of double bonding also plays a role. When it comes to socioeconomic advancement, the findings suggest that social networks have less influence than in the case of bonding. Moreover, we only find a correlation with assimilation. Double bonding appears to play no role here. Other characteristics, such as education level and command of the Dutch language, are more important determinants of labour market position. When it comes to social advancement, the 'overtaxing the concept' thesis (expecting too much of social capital) is not insignificant.

All in all, therefore, there is something to be said for a policy of promoting interethnic contact, at least if one endorses the belief that members of ethnic minorities should have stronger ties with the Netherlands and the Dutch.

Does ethnic diversity diminish social cohesion?

In his article 'E pluribus unum' ('from many, one'), Putnam argues that ethnic diversity in the immediate residential setting leads – at least in the short term – to declining solidarity and trust. People living in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods tend to turn inwards, a phenomenon described by Putnam as 'hunkering down'. Trust declines, mutual help and cooperation become scarcer, friendships fewer, and all this happens within people's own groups. People withdraw into their shells. Putnam had addressed the fragmentation of community ties in the US earlier using the term 'bowling alone' as a metaphor for diminishing social cohesion. However, this is the first time he establishes a direct relationship with ethnic diversity.

This chapter examines the influence of ethnic diversity in the residential setting on social cohesion in the Netherlands. This is a question with important policy implications. The Netherlands – and its neighbouring countries – currently favour a policy aimed at creating mixed neighbourhoods and districts, based on the idea that such mixing will solve many of the observed problems. For example, mixing, it is believed, will prevent neighbourhoods becoming (further) stigmatised as problem neighbourhoods; it will give deprived residents an opportunity to improve themselves because they see from other residents that there are possibilities for advancement (exemplary function); moreover, it is assumed that social networks arise in mixed neighbourhoods in which residents with potential can help weaker fellow residents. The assumption in research and policy underlying this philosophy is that ethnic concentration (large numbers of non-Western ethnic minorities within a neighbourhood) is bad for social cohesion. However, this may not be entirely true, and it is possible that the presence of many different groups itself damages social cohesion. Is mono-ethnicity better for social cohesion? And if it is, does this then constitute an argument for segregation? Is cohesion fostered if everyone withdraws within their own neighbourhood?

We try to answer these questions in this chapter. Putnam's hypothesis appears to hold to only a limited extent in the Dutch context; ethnic diversity has a negative effect only as regards contacts in the neighbourhood (with neighbours and other local residents); in other words, the presence of large numbers of ethnic minority groups in the neighbourhood has a negative impact on neighbourhood contacts. For the other dimensions of cohesion studied here, no diversity effect was found. Trust in others, performing voluntary work and providing informal help are all lower than in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods, but this was found to be due simply to the fact that more people live in these neighbourhoods who score lower on these dimensions anyway. In other words, this is a compositional effect, not a diversity effect. At municipality level, too, social cohesion is not by definition lower in municipalities with more ethnic diversity. A key indicator for this is that the three biggest cities in the Netherlands, with far and away the most ethnic diversity, are not the localities with the lowest scores on social cohesion.

What do our findings mean for policy? First and foremost, the situation in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods is not as dramatic in the Netherlands as in the US. It is not the case that people trust each other less *because* they live in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods. Moreover, we found no indications that helping each other and doing voluntary work are influenced by ethnic diversity. There is less social cohesion in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, simply because more people live there who are in a disadvantaged position. The conclusion is that government attention should be directed towards combating socioeconomic disadvantage. For example, if the education level and employment rate of disadvantaged groups increase, this has positive consequences for mutual trust and willingness to help others. Despite this, these

and other Dutch research findings do indicate that something is going on: ethnic diversity – or the concentration of non-Western ethnic minorities – has a negative effect on direct neighbourhood contact.

Leisure time use as a source of cohesion in a multi-ethnic Netherlands?

To a greater extent than at home, at work or in education, people in their free time are able to choose what they do, how they do it and with whom. The way in which people structure this ‘what, how and with whom’ in their leisure time gives an impression of the degree of social cohesion in society. Do people mainly opt for individualistic activities in their free time or do they primarily engage in activities with others?

The lack of both empirical evidence and theoretical consensus makes this question doubly interesting. Does participation in culture and sport really foster cohesion, does it undermine it or is there no relationship at all? Given the growing urgency of the integration issue, attention has grown in Dutch policy circles for the presumed effect of leisure time use on social cohesion in general and on interethnic cohesion in particular. The objectives of the sport and culture policy are defined partly in terms of social cohesion and integration. The Coalition Agreement of the fourth Balkenende government states that the arts and culture bind people together, that cultural policy contributes to social cohesion and that a rich cultural life is essential for creating a sense of community. Popular sport is described as ‘a binding factor in society, which is important for the transfer of norms and values, social cohesion and integration’. This assumption is briefly explored here.

In all four ethnic groups studied, more participation in culture and sport is associated with more interethnic leisure time contacts. Among Turks and Moroccans, a stronger focus on their own media is associated with fewer such contacts and less identification with the Netherlands. In all these cases, an underlying third factor may be the reason for the relationships found. Participation in culture and sport, like interethnic leisure time contacts, suggests a certain open-mindedness and a tendency to spend leisure time outside the home, whereas conversely, the pursuit of news and leisure contacts from one’s own ethnic group points to an inward-looking focus.

Beyond this, however, virtually no relationship is found between leisure time use and social cohesion. Trust in others (relatively low among ethnic minorities), the sense of being respected by others and positive feelings between immigrants and the native population (relatively low among natives) are associated with leisure time use only sporadically in the indigenous population. There is thus almost no correlation between leisure time use and social cohesion. Where there is a relationship, there is uncertainty about its causal interpretation. These observations do not support the present culture and sports policy, which seeks to promote social cohesion.

Looking ahead to the future has already shown us that tomorrow's ethnic minorities are likely to be more culturally active, take part in sport more and be less focused on their own media. This partly reflects the fact that more and more members of ethnic minorities are born and raised in the Netherlands and have received a better education. Does this prediction say anything about the influence of leisure time use on the cohesion between ethnic groups in the future? Sadly, the significance is unclear because of the uncertainty about the causal relationship. The fact that there is little correlation between leisure time use and social cohesion in the second generation of ethnic minorities also gives no cause for optimism about the potential social effect of their changing leisure time use.

Social contacts via digital channels

New technology has opened the way for new forms of communication. The diversity of ways in which people can make online contact has grown. The increased computer use is recreating the social space and changing the relationship between individuals and groups. This chapter uses available research to describe the changes that the rise of the Internet have brought about in the establishment and maintaining of social contacts, in feelings of connectedness and in whether people feel excluded in an information society. Has the level of social contact increased or decreased? Has the quality of social relationships improved or deteriorated? Do friends in the virtual world also meet each other in the physical world?

The communication possibilities offered by the new media are changing the way in which people interact. A number of expectations about how these changes would take place were formulated in the 1990s. The positive expectations have proved to be true to only a limited extent, while the negative expectations hold for only small groups. The Internet mainly serves as a supplement to existing social contacts, and supports social communities. For most people, the online network consists largely of existing friends, family and acquaintances. There are virtually no indications that the Internet undermines existing communities or changes them beyond recognition. Although it is true that the number of hours Dutch people spend on social contacts has declined since the rise of the Internet began, it remains unclear to what extent this is due to increased Internet use. Other causes are also possible, including an increase in activities with a strongly social dimension, such as participation in sport. Moreover, a large part of the time spent on the Internet is devoted to social contacts.

In the early years of Internet use, researchers concluded that there was a correlation between Internet use and loneliness; there was simply too few people online for contacts to be established. Today, virtually everyone in the Netherlands is online and social contact via the Internet has become commonplace. This is generally associated with positive experiences, and especially by people who already have large social networks and adequate social skills. Less socially skilled people find virtually

no solace in the virtual world (though mention is sometimes made of deeper contact). Here, too, Internet use complements life in the physical world.

Research has shown that members of ethnic minorities who have relatively frequent contact with members of the native population in the physical world are the most likely to have such contacts online as well. The level of integration on the Internet mainly appears to reflect the level of integration offline. This appears to suggest that the Internet reinforces processes that are already ongoing. The same applies for interaction processes at neighbourhood level. Since Internet communication is independent of physical location, it is somewhat paradoxical to expect it to strengthen neighbourhood contacts. Yet in some cases this is possible, though only where an organised initiative is already in place. Where there is a favourable interplay of offline and online factors, therefore, the Internet can strengthen social contacts.

The gradual spread of new technology is giving rise to a disadvantaged class: a shrinking group of people, mainly elderly, feel left out when it comes to computers and the Internet. As it becomes more and more natural for people to have access to the Internet, and as more and more information is made available only online, the chance of these groups being socially excluded increases.

The many digital possibilities create a certain amount of pressure: because things *can* happen quickly, they must happen quickly. There is an increasing rationalisation of time use, including leisure time. Technological possibilities support the already increased ambitions for a varied and challenging leisure time repertoire, including in the social arena. Not everyone takes a positive view of this potential to establish contact immediately and everywhere. The digital generation appears to be remarkably untroubled by the intensified contact, however; today's young people have never known a world which moves at a slower pace and have no fears of the speeded-up life created by technology.

Religious groups and social cohesion

The decline in regular church attendance, the rise of a sort of 'religion à-la-carte', the acknowledgement of the personal autonomy of believers, the great ideological plurality, ideological nomadism: these are all indicative of the erosion of the institutional basis and validation of religion. Even where Dutch people are interested in religious topics, they increasingly follow spiritual pathways which by no means always end up at the door of the church, or they retain the right to choose their religious family for themselves. Often they have highly personal religious interests without a clear institutional context. The churches are still seen by many Dutch people as providers, guardians and disseminators of all things that are sacred to us, though this perception is no longer automatic, and as one of the few institutions which is capable of doing this. Does this also mean that Christianity is no longer a relevant factor for social cohesion? Do modern Dutch people at most value

the ceremonial functions of religion and do they still see religion as a protector of morality? And to what extent has a religiously inspired sense of community made way for incidental and secular eruptions of belonging, 'belonging without believing', a sort of 'standby solidarity' without any biblical reference?

A large majority of the present Dutch population take no part (any longer) in church life; this secularisation does not appear to be accompanied by much anguish and hand-wringing. The rapid process of 'depillarisation' (the crumbling of the vertical dividing lines running through Dutch society based on religious and ideological dividing lines) and secularisation which took place in the second half of the 20th century by no means imply that politicians, scientists and the media attach no importance to religion. On the contrary, religion has (re)gained its perceived value in the preservation of norms and values. Those who espouse civil society see religion as a way of encouraging people to perform voluntary work, while for social critics, religion can serve as a thorn in the flesh of those in power and as a medium for highlighting social wrongs. For idealists, religion embodies the promise of a more humane society. And then there is the function of religion as a source of rituals during national events (commemorations, disasters, national festivities), as a means of marking collective identity (as a Muslim, as a Dutch citizen, as a European), as a source of inspiration and encouragement at various points in people's lives (birth, marriage or death). And many other functions could be mentioned. They are related to the strongly collective dimensions of religious life. However, it is precisely those dimensions which are crumbling in the present-day Netherlands, in favour of more individual ideological orientations.

The significance of religion for social cohesion was analysed here on the basis of Dutch public opinion. Based on public perceptions, religion appears to be of importance chiefly in people's private lives: for more than half the Dutch population religion plays an important role in biographical transitions such as birth and death. Less importance is attached to the public functions of religion: roughly a third see an important role for religion as a bastion of morality, in the event of disasters and during commemorations. Fewer than two in ten see religion as a critical institution against social wrongs or regard it as an important element of Dutch or European identity.

Feeling at one with other Dutch people is a sentiment of fairly recent date. For a long time, religion formed an important basis for a sense of community among the Dutch, although until the 1960s this was largely channelled through identification with a particular 'pillar' or church subculture. The binding force of these social, ideological and religious pillars has been greatly weakened in recent decades and appears to have made way for more individually tinted forms of affinity. Examples include being of a common mind on the basis of a shared education, comparable working environment, having the same leisure interests, or a corresponding life-

style. The reduced importance of religion does not however mean that forms of national identification have also disappeared.

Despite these trends, around a quarter of the Dutch population still feel closely connected to a church or religious group and social contacts in such a religious community – generally with a local character – are an important motive for taking part in religious gatherings. The church is an important source of social capital, as has been established in much national and international research, and secularisation will therefore have a major negative impact on voluntary work, for example. On the other hand there are developments pointing in other directions, such as rising education levels. Church communities are moreover not the only sources of social engagement, even in the ideological arena; relatively individualised forms of spirituality are also often accompanied by social engagement.

As with the indigenous churches, immigrant churches and mosques are important meeting places for their followers – havens where people come together from a shared cultural background. They also serve as social networks which provide mutual support and assistance. Active participation in religious gatherings also appears to foster participation in the broader society (via memberships and donorships as well as via voluntary work). Members of ethnic minorities are affiliated to organisations much less often than the indigenous population, a difference which manifests itself virtually across the board (from sports clubs to trade unions), but are very strong in sectors such as nature, the environment and international solidarity. The participation rate of ethnic minorities in organisations is also well below that of the native population, and they are also found less often among the frequent donors to good causes. The findings with respect to Christian religious communities (indigenous or ethnic minority) also appears to hold for mosque communities: Muslims who regularly attend religious gatherings (like regular churchgoers among Christians) play a more active part in civil society than believers whose membership is only formal. This group is also more strongly attached to retaining their own customs and culture and passing these on to later generations. The combination of an attachment to a familiar environment and, stemming from it, a tendency towards broader social participation, is not a specific characteristic of Muslims, but also manifests itself in Christian immigrant churches, for example.

Part-time working in the Netherlands¹

Wil Portegijs and Saskia Keuzenkamp (ed.)

This report presents an outline of recent developments in the labour force participation and working hours of women. It also looks at how far these developments correlate with views on the role of women in the family and on the labour market. Attention is focused mainly on the Netherlands, though in some cases a comparison is made with other Western countries.

Part-time work in the Netherlands

Working part-time has long been seen in the Netherlands as an ideal way for women to combine paid employment with care tasks in the home. In line with this view, the government has introduced legislation enabling every employee to tailor their working hours to their requirements and ensuring that the rights of part-time workers are properly protected. Partly as a result of this, part-time work in the Netherlands has not, as in some other countries, remained limited to marginal jobs, but is also a feature of mainstream employment. Women in particular take advantage of the opportunity to work part-time. This is one of the reasons for the high employment rate among women in the Netherlands. In general, Dutch women are very satisfied with their part-time jobs.

Despite this, part-time working has come to be seen in a less positive light in recent years in both the public and political debate. Critics describe part-time employment as a waste of female talent and argue that it reduces the opportunities for women to attain economic independence and carve out a career for themselves. Moreover, increasing the female employment rate is regarded as essential to ensure that the welfare state remains affordable.

High employment rate but low working hours

The female employment rate in the Netherlands has risen sharply since the 1980s, and can now be described as high in comparison to other Western countries. 68% of women in the Netherlands currently work for a least one hour per week; only the Scandinavian countries and Switzerland have higher percentages. On the other hand, women in the Netherlands much more often work part-time than women in other countries; 75% of working women in the Netherlands work for less than 35 hours per week, almost twice the average in the EU-15. Moreover, the average working week of those in employment in the Netherlands shows virtually no sign of increasing.

Dutch women differ from women in other countries as regards their preferences. In the Netherlands, only a quarter of working women express a preference for a full-time job, compared with more than half in other countries. There are still large groups of women in other countries who would prefer to work part-time, with 20-34 hours per week being seen as the optimum; for many of them, however, the associated loss of income is a reason for not fulfilling this desire.

Working mothers

The growth in the employment rate and the high proportion of part-time jobs can be largely ascribed to working mothers. Most women in the Netherlands today continue to work after the birth of their children, and compared with other countries the employment rate of mothers in the Netherlands is high. This becomes even more apparent if we take into account the fact that mothers in some countries are able to take long-term leave, during which they are still included in the (full-time) employment statistics. The majority of women in the Netherlands do however reduce their working hours after the birth of their first child. This fits in with views in the Netherlands on looking after children; the fact that mothers work is no longer an issue, but mothers having a full-time job goes too far for most Dutch people. The majority feel that it is best for children to be looked after exclusively by their own parents, and they are very reserved about formal childcare. In addition, a third of women and more than half of men believe that women are better suited than men to looking after small children. Working part-time offers mothers an opportunity both to participate in the labour market and to look after their children largely or entirely themselves.

There are few indications that views on looking after children are undergoing any material change. The resistance to formal childcare has reduced slightly, but the belief in the special caring qualities of women and the importance of their presence in the family has actually increased slightly in recent years. Moreover, young women and men think no differently on these points than young women and men did 20 years ago. These views on motherhood are also not unique to the Netherlands: in France, and especially in the former West Germany and Spain, a substantial proportion of the population also believe that families suffer if women work full-time. Part-time working is less well organised in these countries, and the choice made is one between stopping work (perhaps temporarily) and working full-time whilst using childcare facilities.

The fact that women looking after young children tend to work part-time thus fits in with the prevailing views on what constitutes proper care for children. Mothers themselves also prefer part-time work, though on average they would like to work a few hours more than they do at present. Fathers usually work full-time, and would also like to work a few hours more than they currently do.

Women without children

However, not all women have young children who need to be looked after. In fact, 62% of women are not in this position. Only a small minority of people believe that these women, too, should either work part-time or not work at all. Despite this, these women, too, generally work for less than 40 hours per week. Young women without children already work an average of four hours less per week than young men, while women aged 40 years or older who do not (or no longer) have young children barely work more hours outside the home than mothers.

In this regard the Netherlands differs from other countries. Part-time working is much more common among women without children in the Netherlands than in other Western countries. The average working week of mothers with older children is longer in the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Spain than in the Netherlands.

It is unclear why women without young children in the Netherlands also prefer to work part-time. It may be that older women began working part-time when their children were still young and have become accustomed to it. It may also be that, after years on the 'mummy track', work no longer offers such a challenge and is not tempting enough to make them want to devote more time to it. Current research being carried out by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research|SCP, focusing among other things on these part-time working women without young children, is intended to provide greater clarity on this in 2008.

We can conclude that a greater appreciation of full-time mothering is not the only reason for the high percentage of part-time work in the Netherlands; the views on working mothers differ too little from those in other countries (with the exception of Sweden) for this. Moreover, young women and older women without children also more often work part-time in the Netherlands. In addition to the views described above, other factors, such as financial incentives, are found to influence the labour force participation of women.

This study shows that following a life course approach is important. For women with young children, part-time work currently appears to offer the best way of retaining their ties with the labour market. The desire on the part of mothers to continue looking after their children themselves to a large extent whilst the children are still young, coupled with the low proportion of care tasks taken on by fathers, are central drivers here. The situation is different for women who are not overly burdened with care tasks; once the children are older, or if there are no (longer) children to look after, the time available for employment is in principle greater. Policy aimed at increasing working hours will accordingly undoubtedly need to focus on these women. As part of this exercise, a greater understanding needs to be obtained why these women (continue to) choose part-time work.

Volunteers who care¹

Non-institutionalised voluntary work in support of care users and informal carers

Jeroen Devilee

1 Introduction

The report *Volunteers who care* (*Vrijwillig verzorgd*) focuses attention on voluntary care services in the community. These are services provided by volunteers who are not affiliated to a nursing or care institution. These volunteers provide their services in very different locations, such as at the recipient's home, in the local community centre, in a special room at the local mental health care centre or, for example, on a holiday boat or at the zoo. Examples of providers of these services are the Dutch Red Cross and the voluntary organisations *Mezzo* and *De Zonnebloem*.

The study devotes extra attention to the role that volunteers can play in supporting informal carers, for example voluntary home-care organisations which provide someone to sit with a person with dementia or to help families with a disabled child. In all likelihood, volunteers provide a considerable amount of support to informal carers, but at present there is no clear picture of the situation.

The two central questions addressed in this study are:

- 1 How can voluntary community-based care offer support to people with disabilities and heavily burdened informal carers?
- 2 What are the expectations and wishes regarding the future development of voluntary community-based care?

2 Forms of voluntary community-based care

Whether or not voluntary care services in the community are able to offer support to people with disabilities and to heavily burdened informal carers depends on the extent and composition of the services they offer. It is important that the service offers sufficient diversity to accommodate the expected increase in the complexity of care and the wishes of care users for voluntary care which is geared to their particular situation.

The volunteers themselves also wish to see diversity in the support offered, because

1 SCP-publication 2008/1

they are looking more than in the past for something that suits them precisely. The consequence is that organisations are also confronted with growing diversity in the wishes of their volunteers.

In order to find an answer to the first research question, an inventory was compiled of the various types of community-based voluntary care. This revealed how difficult it is to ascertain the extent of voluntary community-based care services. There is often a lack of data, and where data are available, they are often out of date. We can do no more than give an impression here of the extent of these services, based on the fact that the De Zonnebloem voluntary organisation provided voluntary services to 58,424 care users in 2005, that the voluntary home-care association Vrijwillige Thuishulp reached 237,000 clients in 2004 and that the association of volunteers in palliative and terminal care (Vrijwilligers in de Palliatieve en Terminale Zorg) devoted 555,000 hours in 2006 to supporting 5,600 patients in the end stage of life. It is also known from an exploratory survey of consumers and patient organisations that 25,854 people from 16 organisations took part in group sessions with fellow sufferers in 2004.

Table 1
Examples of mixed forms of practical and social/emotional support by volunteers

	target group	social/emotional support dominant	more or less equal proportions	practical support dominant
aimed at individuals	the chronically ill	buddy care, home visits	(wheelchair) walking, (tandem) cycling, swimming, doing shopping	odd jobs in and around the home, garden maintenance, providing meals
	psychiatric patients		buddy contact	
	people in the end stage of life and their informal carers		voluntary palliative terminal care	
	fellow patients and their informal carers	contact with fellow sufferers		
	informal carers			attendance
aimed at groups	the elderly	daycare projects		
	the chronically ill, the disabled and informal carers		accompanying and supporting on events, excursions, day trips and holidays	
	fellow patients and their informal carers	contact with fellow sufferers		

As regards the content of the support, the study shows that voluntary community-based care is almost always a mixture of practical and social/emotional support, but that the proportion of these two components can vary enormously. One form of support in which social/emotional support predominates is visiting and keeping company. In other forms of support, such as cooking, working on the computer, gardening, cycling, swimming or accompanying people to football matches, the practical component is more dominant. The forms of voluntary support also vary depending on the target group and whether or not the support is aimed at groups or individuals (table 1).

The great diversity of support provided is due to the fact that community-based voluntary care responds to the care needs of specific target groups such as people with HIV and psychiatric patients. Newer forms of community-based voluntary care have recently emerged, or existing organisations have begun raising their profile. Examples include voluntary replacement of informal carers by the *Handen in Huis* organisation and the meetings of fellow sufferers which take place in the special informal care and Alzheimer's cafes (*Mantelzorg- en Alzheimercafé's*). In this way, community-based voluntary care is responding to the growing need for care among informal carers and the fact that support for informal carers has acquired a more prominent place on the social and political agenda.

The diversity of the support offered means that both the total number of volunteers and care users is larger than in arrangements where the services provided are more uniform.

Our study distinguishes between direct and indirect support for informal carers. Voluntary palliative terminal care, 'attendance services' provided among others by the voluntary home-care association *Vrijwillige Thuishulp*, contact between fellow sufferers and a proportion of the holidays organised by volunteer organisations are prime examples of activities which make a direct contribution to informal carer support. Support which operates through the care user is regarded here as indirect informal carer support. The total amount of support provided by voluntary community-based care organisations is the sum of the direct and indirect informal carer support.

The great diversity in forms of support is not a bad starting position, either for recruiting volunteers who more than in the past are in search of work they feel suits them, or for the increasing variety in the requirements of care users. However, time will tell how demand-led the sector is and whether the existing and future forms of voluntary community-based care will prove able to attract and retain sufficient volunteers whilst at the same time providing their clients with a good service.

3 Support and embedding of voluntary community-based care

The attraction of voluntary community-based care does not depend only on the diversity of forms which the care can take. In addition to the influence of all manner of external developments, such as people carrying on working until later in life and the rising employment rate of women, it is important that voluntary organisations have a sound internal organisation. Providing a good quality service requires that volunteers are sufficiently well prepared for their tasks and that the organisation has a healthy financial basis. The quality of the service provided to clients is also influenced by the degree to which the service is geared to other members of the local care network. The third chapter accordingly gives a description of the support and embedding of voluntary community-based care in that local care network.

Volunteers in the care sector receive a relatively large amount of substantive support. The national and regional umbrella organisations are the main providers of information in this context, which is provided increasingly via specially configured and member-only areas of the Internet (extranet). The umbrella organisations focus heavily on a demand-led approach to providing their support; this is evidently a topical issue and one where there is room for improvement.

The match between different voluntary community-based care organisations and between these organisations and professional care organisations is not always optimal, and is sometimes even entirely absent. The great diversity of organisations is partly the cause of this, as it makes it more difficult to gain a clear overview of the field. The fact that volunteers feel drawn to one specific type of support and have much less affinity with other forms of care or with the care provision as a whole, is also a factor here. The great diversity of voluntary community-based care, which came as a positive surprise in the second chapter, thus turns out to have a downside. Despite these difficulties, cooperative structures do occur in some regions and municipalities. This is something that needs to be taken into account when seeking to improve coordination.

4 Practices in other countries

In the fourth chapter we stand back a little from the Dutch care system and the way in which voluntary work is organised there, in order to look at experiences abroad which could perhaps be of use in the Dutch situation. In the discussion of practices abroad, we limit ourselves to the neighbouring countries Germany, Belgium (Flanders), France and the United Kingdom. There are wide differences in the extent to which informal care in these countries figures on the political and social agenda. France, where informal care is barely an issue, is at one end of the spectrum. At the other end is the United Kingdom, where informal care has for some decades been an item on the social and political agenda and where informal carers have been increasingly recognised by the government over the last 20 years. Flanders and Germany occupy an intermediate position.

The tasks carried out by volunteers in community-based care are the same in our neighbouring countries as in the Netherlands. Volunteers are used in almost all cases to supplement professional carers in providing practical and social/emotional support. The services provided include visiting the sick and elderly, accompanying/supporting people with activities, contact with fellow sufferers, telephone help, providing meals, adapted holidays and voluntary palliative and terminal care.

Despite the similarity in the nature of the work carried out, there are lessons that can be learned from the way in which volunteers provide community-based care. From the practices in Germany and the United Kingdom we learn that volunteers can fulfil a mentor role for informal carers and care users and can thus foster the emancipation of these two vulnerable groups. The British example moreover teaches us that it is useful to subdivide social/emotional care into 'friendship' and 'mentorship', with the latter being aimed at increasing the competences of both care users and informal carers. The French home-care organisation ADMR shows that volunteers (in rural areas) can function as the 'front office' of the organisation. In Flanders, the 'Nachtzorg Antwerpen' ('Antwerp night care') project demonstrates that volunteers can contribute to providing affordable night-time care, thus enabling service users to be cared for at home for longer. The working methods of the Flemish Red Cross show that voluntary organisations can themselves take the initiative to cooperate with other providers of community-based care.

It is not only the way in which voluntary community-based care is delivered in other countries that can provide a source of inspiration, but also the types of initiative that are developed. The French RESSAC Volontariat is an organisation for voluntary work carried out by pensioners who are affiliated to a pension fund. It is a form of 'silver power' in which care users are visited by volunteers with a comparable professional background. This French initiative could perhaps be copied in the Dutch situation and may also be feasible for staff associations of large employers in industry or large government agencies. In the United Kingdom we found a fund which focuses exclusively on supporting informal carers; no such fund exists in the Netherlands.

Finally, community-based care practices in Flanders show that the government can play an important coordinating and encouraging role in voluntary community-based care. The Flemish government fulfils this role by encouraging and providing information about voluntary attendance services and by fostering cooperation between voluntary and professional home-care services. Part of the mainstream home-care services in Flanders are organised in a 'home-care cooperative initiative' (*SamenwerkingsInitiatief in de Thuiszorg (SIT)*), in which both voluntary and professional home-care organisations participate. The Flemish model for palliative and terminal care also involves government-organised coordination of care providers.

5 *The future of voluntary community-based care*

The fifth chapter of this publication is concerned with expectations and wishes with regard to the future development of voluntary community-based care. At present, there is a great deal of uncertainty as to which direction the care will take. For this chapter we therefore asked 19 experts about their expectations and wishes for voluntary community-based care over the next five to ten years.

Expectations

The experts believe that population ageing and the increasing displacement of care from institutions to the community means that a great deal will be asked of the voluntary community-based care sector. The number of complex care needs and the diversity of those care needs is likely to increase.

Continuing individualisation will also increase the diversity of the volunteer base and therefore mean that volunteers place heavier demands on volunteer organisations. The sector is likely to respond to this by providing better training for volunteers and working in a more demand-led way. This will increase the need for coordination. If organisations providing intensive voluntary community-based care are able to find the resources, they will increasingly have these tasks carried out by professionals.

Informal carers, socially isolated older persons and ethnic minority older persons will be target groups which receive extra attention from voluntary community-based care organisations over the next five to ten years. The growing diversity among clients means that organisations will also have to allow for differing groups of care users.

The expectation is that older people in particular will perform voluntary work in the future. However, volunteer organisations are also working to increase the diversity of their volunteers by recruiting from ethnic minorities, people combining work with care tasks and young people – a necessary operation given the increasing diversity of care users.

During the present government term, more young people will be involved in voluntary community-based care, because the government Coalition Agreement includes a requirement for a placement in the non-profit or volunteer sector. The experts do not expect these placements to have a major impact on voluntary community-based care. For one thing, school students often lack the qualifications needed by volunteers in this sector; moreover, the contributions will be very limited and it is difficult to offer school students in this sector sufficient support.

Supporters and providers of voluntary community-based care do not believe that professionalisation of their work will have a dampening effect on the supply of volun-

teers. Professionalisation is a response by volunteer organisations to the increasingly complex care needs. One consequence of this is that organisations, especially those operating in intensive voluntary community-based care, will increasingly make training sessions and courses compulsory. In combination with other measures, such as laying down procedures and agreements in contracts, the result will be that volunteer organisations increasingly take on the characteristics of professional care organisations, and it remains to be seen to what extent of volunteers will accept this. According to the experts, volunteers are generally in favour of professionalisation, because it enables them to perform their tasks better.

Legislation and regulation does in any event have a dampening effect on the supply of volunteers (vws 2005). The most relevant legislation in the voluntary care sector is legislation relating to 'voluntary work and social security benefits', health and safety legislation and legislation relating to liability. Although the government has recently introduced a number of measures to simplify the legislation and regulations, they continue to impose a considerable burden. For some potential volunteers, this will be enough to prevent them from volunteering.

The match between the demand for and the supply of voluntary community-based care will not be in balance in the future, despite all the efforts to make it so. The growing care demand will be accompanied by a decline in the supply of volunteers. The experts see the chief causes of this as being the limited popularity of voluntary work in the care sector, the fact that people are continuing in mainstream employment until later in life and the growing employment rate of women. The result is that the shortage of volunteers in the voluntary community-based care sector will increase over the next five to ten years.

Wishes

The experts believe that local volunteer organisations will have to begin cooperating better, because the present working methods lead to a great deal of wasted energy. This will require more efficient training of volunteers, mutual division of tasks and better coordination of the specialisations of volunteer organisations. Moreover, the problems need to be approached from the perspective of the client and the informal carer. It is also desirable to improve the coordination between voluntary care organisations and professional care organisations, to foster cooperation between local authorities and voluntary community-based care organisations, and for local authorities to facilitate coordination between different voluntary care organisations. An important precondition for the latter two proposals is that local authorities increase their knowledge of voluntary community-based care.

The majority of experts believe that supporting voluntary community-based care is a task for the government, because it can play an important role in creating the necessary conditions for performing voluntary work. This applies in particular for the use

of older volunteers. Volunteers with a low income could be encouraged to put themselves forward if organisations were able to pay higher reimbursement for expenses. Voluntary care organisations themselves often do not have the resources to do this.

A smaller proportion of the experts believe that voluntary community-based care organisations should not become too dependent on the authorities. They would consider it a good thing if the support provided by dedicated funds and ‘good cause lotteries’ were to increase. One problem here is that these organisations only fund actual projects, for example the building or equipping of a hospice. The experts would like to see these organisations modify their policy on this point, so that coordinators could for example be paid on the basis of their contributions.

The majority of respondents believe it would be a good thing if voluntary community-based care organisations were to devote more attention in the coming years to the diversity among care users. The increasing transfer of care provision from institutions to the community will lead to an increase in the number of target groups. This has implications for the type of volunteers that organisations will have to recruit, since they will have to reflect the diversity of the service users.

The experts believe that more attention should be given to the use of members of ethnic minorities in the provision of voluntary community-based care. This wish is based on the expectation that the demand for care among elderly members of ethnic minorities will increase in the future. Efforts also need to be made to increase the involvement of volunteers who have busy everyday lives combining work and care tasks (‘task-combiners’). Performing work and care tasks need not always be at odds with performing voluntary work in the care sector.

Finally, there are indications for the wishes of the experts as regards the character of voluntary community-based care over the next five to ten years. Two of the experts’ main wishes are that voluntary community-based care must be unpaid and that it must be largely demand-led.

6 Conclusion and discussion

The final chapter summarises the main findings of the study. In addition to the findings in the foregoing sections, this chapter discusses the fact that voluntary support for informal carers appears to be on the rise. This is confirmed in the second chapter, which shows that new forms of voluntary informal care support have recently emerged. Chapter 3 also contains indications for this in the connections between voluntary informal care support within the mental health care service (GGZ) and the informal care support provided by the membership organisations of Mezzo. Finally, the forward study also shows that voluntary community-based care organisations will need to devote more attention to providing support for informal carers over the next five to ten years

The final discussion brings out the fact that the study encountered a number of dilemmas for the voluntary community-based care sector. The three most important are discussed here. One of the biggest dilemmas derives from the tension between diversity and clarity. Diversity means that a greater number of people in need of care can be helped than is the case with a homogeneous group of providers, because there is a greater chance that a match can be found between care user and volunteer. From this perspective, therefore, variety in the care supply is a good thing. The flipside is the lack of clarity and the consequent lack of coordination referred to earlier between the different voluntary care organisations, and between voluntary community-based care and professional care. This does not benefit care users. However, local authorities must not try to reorganise this apparently chaotic situation too much, because this will undermine the diversity. The national and regional umbrella organisations could however offer a helping hand in creating clarity and coordination between local organisations. Dividing voluntary community-based care into intensive and extensive forms could also possibly contribute to a solution.

Another problem is where to draw the line between voluntary community-based care and the national care system. The coming into force of the Social Support Act (Wmo), which accords considerable importance to volunteers, has created a danger that volunteers will be taken for granted as a self-evident part of the care system. This is however not quite so self-evident: voluntary community-based care organisations are in principle left out; they have never been asked to become part of the 'care chain'. Voluntary community-based care organisations are well aware of the importance for the quality of the service provided to their clients to create administrative coordination between the different voluntary care organisations and between these organisations and the professional care sector. As a result, they do become intertwined with the mainstream care system to some extent, and as a result there is some tension in the voluntary community-based care sector between autonomy and the quality of service delivery to clients.

A third dilemma manifests itself on the 'work floor'. Here, the question of whether volunteers should carry out certain personal care tasks plays a role, including tasks that normally are left to professionals. Examples include providing help with showering and dressing and the administering of medicines for which no specific nursing actions are required. Sometimes it is not practical to bring in a professional to perform these tasks. The volunteer then prefers to help the care user as well as possible. There is a tension here between good service delivery to the client and drawing a line between the work of the volunteer and the work of professionals. The sector would do well to make agreements on when a volunteer can and cannot perform certain services. Consideration also needs to be given to which tasks volunteers would be willing to 'assume' from professionals.

Finally, a number of recommendations are made for supplementary research. One recommendation is that a large-scale field study be carried out to ascertain the exact size and characteristics of the voluntary community-based care sector. No such data are currently available. One aspect which deserves special attention within such a study would be the services provided by volunteers to informal carers. Based on the existing research it is not possible to state the precise extent of these services, partly because the support directed at the care user is in many cases in fact intended to relieve the burden of the informal carer.

The daily life of urban ethnic minorities¹

Andries van den Broek and Saskia Keuzenkamp

Focus on daily life

Policy and research in connection with ethnic minorities in the Netherlands devotes most attention to issues such as education level, command of the Dutch language, labour market position, income situation and geographical segregation. That is understandable, because ethnic minorities tend to be in a worse position in these key areas than members of the indigenous population. In the light of this, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP has devoted attention in numerous publications to the problematic socio-economic position and socio-cultural integration of ethnic minority groups. The problems studied include civic integration, education level and command of the Dutch language, school career, employment, income, housing, criminality, mutual perceptions, the position of women and girls and socio-cultural integration.

Less pressing policy issues, such as participation in and distribution of unpaid work, media consumption, cultural participation and mobility – and any differences in these areas between ethnic groups – have received little attention in comparison. This report seeks to fill that gap, by studying whether and to what extent members of ethnic minorities differ from the indigenous population in their daily lives. The aim of the study was not to focus on disadvantage and problems – not because these are unimportant, but in order to add to the picture.

Based on a large-scale survey of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans and a control group of indigenous citizens living in the 50 largest municipalities in the Netherlands, we present a picture in this publication of the daily lives of the various groups studied, outside the arenas of paid employment and education. The study looks at the extent to which differences exist between the five ethnic groups in the way they spend their day, participation in household work and care for children, provision of informal care, involvement in civil society, cultural participation, participation in sport and going out, media consumption, social contacts in leisure time, and mobility.

Use, conception and organisation of time

There are two differences of emphasis in conceptions of time. In the first place, there are clear differences in the desired opening times for shops and services. Urban dwellers of ethnic minorities attach much more importance to (more) extensive

opening hours for shops and services than their indigenous counterparts, especially Turks and Moroccans. Turks and Moroccans also have less desire to exert control over their time, although these are only small differences of emphasis. Moreover, they do not apply for Surinamese and Antilleans, so that the stereotypical image that a 'southern' life is characterised by less rigid control of time receives virtually no support.

Time use differs because more indigenous than ethnic minority citizens perform paid work during the week. As a result, the latter have fewer obligations and spend less time travelling to and from work. If we compare only those in paid work, little remains of this difference. When it comes to leisure time, the correspondences between ethnic groups are greater than the differences. The use of electronic media (especially tv and pc) is the most popular form of leisure time use in every group, followed by social contacts.

Similarly, the study reveals virtually no differences in the way different ethnic groups organise their time. The similarity in the timing of activities is particularly striking. Lack of data meant it was not possible to establish how differently Muslims spend Fridays from other groups.

Members of ethnic minorities spend less time travelling than the indigenous population and travel fewer kilometres per unit travel time. The reason they travel less is that Turkish and Moroccan women, in particular, leave the home relatively infrequently. The fact that they travel shorter distances per unit of time is not due to greater use of the bicycle, since this is a fairly unpopular mode of transport precisely among these groups. Members of ethnic minorities also travel less by car, but more often use public transport than indigenous citizens.

Efforts on behalf of others

An often quite considerable part of the day is spent on more or less compulsory activities, of which looking after the household and children is an important one. Turks and Moroccans spend the most time per day on average on these tasks, Antilleans and the indigenous population the least. In all groups, women perform far and away the biggest share of domestic work and looking after children. In Turkish and Moroccan households, women spend approximately four times as much time on these tasks as men; in the other groups the figure is roughly twice as much. There are also wide differences between the first and second generations, which can be largely explained by their life situation; a high proportion of the second generation do not (yet) live independently and do not (yet) have a partner or children – factors which go a long way to explaining the time spent by women on the household. The marked difference between the ethnic groups is attributable mainly to the fact that Turkish and Moroccan women invest significantly more time than women from the other groups in the household and looking after their children. There are virtually no differences between men in the five ethnic groups studied.

Between 14% and 20% of 15-64 year-old town-dwellers provide informal care (care which people give to each other voluntarily, unpaid and informally). The proportion

of people providing informal care is not the same in all ethnic groups. In contrast to what is sometimes assumed, the proportion is lower in ethnic minority groups than in indigenous groups. The lowest figure is found among Antilleans and Turks; Moroccans and Surinamese occupy a middle position. Much of the explanation for this striking finding lies in the fact that a much smaller proportion of ethnic minority groups are elderly in need of help than their counterparts in the indigenous population. Differences in the interpretation of what is meant by informal care probably also play a role.

One reason which is sometimes put forward for the (assumed) high proportion of ethnic minorities who provide informal care relates to their views on care. This study confirms that members of ethnic minorities prefer informal care to professional help to a greater extent than indigenous groups. They also show a greater willingness to provide this care. However, the analysis to explain the differences reveals no correlation between such views and whether or not people actually give informal care. Evidently people provide informal care if it is needed, regardless of whether they consider it a good thing or not.

A sizeable proportion of the population are active as volunteers or contribute to social cohesion through membership of or donations to various organisations: in other words, participation in civil society. The many ways in which people can do this were summarised for this study by the term 'active participation'. Indigenous urban dwellers are active participants in civil society to a greater extent (57%) than Turks and Moroccans (both 26%) and Surinamese and Antillean town-dwellers (both 35%). Turkish and Moroccan men participate more often than women; this difference is smaller or absent in the other groups. Members of the second generation are more active in this area than members of the first generation, especially among Moroccans. Active participation in religious life is associated in all five ethnic groups with a relatively high degree of participation in civil society. It is already known from other research that the degree of organisation is fairly high among Turks and that Turks have a stronger focus than other ethnic minorities on their own ethnic group. This picture is confirmed in this study; Turks are involved much more often than the other groups with organisations containing mainly people from their own ethnic group.

Leisure time use

Members of ethnic minorities have a much smaller repertoire of leisure time activities than indigenous citizens. This applies in particular for Turks and Moroccans, while Surinamese and Antilleans occupy a middle position. These differences can be traced back largely, though not entirely, to differences in the composition of the groups in terms of personal characteristics such as education level, income and command of the Dutch language.

The breadth of the leisure time repertoire provides a useful picture of the number of activities undertaken by people in their free time, but reveals no specific details about social contacts, sport, visits to restaurants and bars, media consumption or

culture. These aspects are discussed briefly below.

Turks spend more of their leisure time than others with family, neighbours and fellow neighbourhood residents. Surinamese and Antilleans have far and away the most interethnic contacts, both within and outside the home. At the same time, they spend more time at home alone than the other groups. Native Dutch citizens receive the fewest visitors at home and maintain the fewest interethnic leisure contacts, both within and outside the home.

Members of ethnic minorities play less sport, are less often members of a sports club and perform less voluntary work for sport than their indigenous counterparts. This applies particularly for Turks and Moroccans, and within these groups especially for women and the elderly. Ethnic minorities, again particularly Turks and Moroccans, also participate less in leisure time activity outside the home, such as visiting bars, restaurants and cultural activities, than the indigenous population.

The differences in media consumption between indigenous and ethnic groups are smaller than the many satellite dishes on display would suggest. The majority of members of ethnic minorities read Dutch newspapers, watch Dutch(-language) television programmes and use the Internet. However, they do this less than the indigenous population, although the Surinamese and Antilleans closely resemble the native Dutch in this regard. The media consumption by Turks differs most from that of the indigenous population, due to their fairly strong orientation towards newspapers and television programmes from their country of origin.

The differences which emerged in the discussion of social contacts, participation in sport, visits to bars and restaurants and cultural participation can be ascribed only partially to differences in the composition of the ethnic groups studied. As regards media consumption, however, the differences disappeared or only very small differences remained after statistical control for compositional differences.

Implications

This snapshot provides a picture of the differences and correspondences in the daily lives of the five groups studied, but also begs the question of what the future will bring; will the differences increase, are they permanent or will they diminish. Strictly speaking, little can be said about this on the basis of a snapshot such as that presented by this study. Assuming that in the future a higher proportion of ethnic minorities will be born in the Netherlands, will be educated here and will have a command of the Dutch language, it is possible that the present-day lives of members of ethnic minorities who already meet that description could, with the necessary caveats, provide a pointer to that future. Overall, the predominant expectation is that the daily lives of ethnic minorities and indigenous citizens will then resemble each other (even) more than they do at present. However, not all differences will disappear 'automatically'; differences in their participation in civil society, the breadth of their leisure time repertoire, their Internet use, their visits to bars and restaurants, their use of parks, their participation in sport and culture and their use of bicycles mean that ethnic minorities will probably continue to distinguish themselves from the indigenous population.

Values on a grey scale¹

Elderly Policy Monitor 2008

Cretien van Campen (ed.)

In 2005 the Dutch government set out its policy on the elderly against the background of population ageing in the policy memorandum *Nota '64' Ouderenbeleid in het perspectief van de vergrijzing* (TK 2004-/2005b; henceforth 'Memorandum 64'). The underlying principle is that the elderly are 'sovereign and valuable citizens, even if important resources for an independent existence disappear at some point in their lives'. The government derived basic values from this Memorandum in relation to health, contribution to society, purchasing power, mobility, housing, care dependency and end of life. The government wishes to reinforce these values and set out a number of policy objectives in the Memorandum, complete with targets, in order to achieve this. The government's intention is to track the achievement of the targets by means of an Elderly Policy Monitor (*Monitor ouderenbeleid*) published every two years.

The coordinating Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (vws) asked the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP to compile a first Monitor as a trial edition. The SCP remit was not only to test the extent to which the targets set out in the Memorandum have been achieved, but also to develop the Monitor further.

Memorandum 64 contains policy objectives and targets in seven domains:

- 1 Active contribution to society (paid and unpaid work);
- 2 Income;
- 3 Mobility (public and collective transport);
- 4 Housing (homes for the elderly);
- 5 Staying healthy (exercise, fall prevention);
- 6 Ensuring care for vulnerable elderly (sufficient care, quality of care);
- 7 Dying with dignity.

This study evaluates the targets set out in Memorandum 64 on the basis of two central questions:

- 1 Have the targets formulated by the government in 2005 been achieved?
- 2 Are the proposed indicators suitable for future monitoring or do they need improvement?

1 SCP-publication 2008/12

SCP in fact interpreted the remit more broadly and also looked at trends for the longer term, and where possible at subgroups of older people (e.g. 55-64 year-olds, 65-74 year-olds and the over-75s).

Achievement of targets

Paid work

The policy objective of active social participation by older people is translated into targets in relation to paid and unpaid work. The target of a labour market participation rate of 50% among people aged 55-64 by 2010 will be achieved if the increase in the rate continues at its present pace. In 2003, 43.3 % of 55-64 year-olds were working for a least one hour per week; this had risen by more than three percentage points in 2006, to 46.7%. Analyses over a longer period show that the activity rates of men and women in this age group have developed differently. The turnaround in the labour market participation rate of working men aged 55-64 years began to change in around 1993/94, when the Dutch economy began to climb out of the economic decline. The activity rate of older women has by contrast shown a rising trend since the middle of the 1980s, though the starting level was very low.

Unpaid work

In addition to paid work, participation in unpaid work by volunteers is one of the policy objectives. The commitment to maintaining a constant share of volunteers among the over-65s has not been achieved in recent years. An analysis of long-term trends shows that, following an initial increase, the proportion of volunteers began to fall after 2002. The decline in 2006 relative to 2004 appears to have taken place mainly among older people who were not members of a religious community.

Income

The policy objective that older people must have a sufficient income to enable them to live independently is translated into a target for improving the purchasing power of older people living alone living and receiving only state retirement pension. The target of maintaining the purchasing power improvement (106%) for single elderly people living alone with only state pension relative to single social assistance benefit claimants under 65 years has been achieved. Up to and including 1994, social assistance benefits and the state pension were exactly the same. In 1995 the older person's tax credit (*ouderenkorting*) was introduced, and raised substantially in 1999. Currently, in 2008, the net state pension amounts to approximately 111% of social assistance benefit.

Mobility

The policy objective that the elderly must be able to move around freely and safely is translated into targets for the accessibility of public transport. Following consultation with the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management (V&W),

it was decided not to include a separate chapter on mobility in this Monitor. The Ministry of V&W has developed a new set of indicators for the long term (from 2015 to 2030) for the accessibility of urban and district transport and railway transport; these replace the indicators used in the 2005 policy memorandum.

Housing

Older people must have access to adequate housing, which is tailored to their individual needs and supported by customised care provision. This policy objective is operationalised in targets for sufficient stairless homes, where all living areas can be accessed without having to climb stairs, and homes with local on-call care facilities. The question of whether the targets for adequate homes have been achieved can be answered only partially. A change in the definition means it is not possible to determine the increase in the number of stairless homes. The number of homes for the elderly with on-call care facilities ('supported living') rose from around 101,000 to approximately 129,000 between 2002 and 2006. This increase of more than 7,000 homes per year was however not sufficient to achieve the target (14,000 per year). The main increase is apparent in households containing the 'youngest' and 'oldest' elderly and in households containing a person with moderate or severe physical disabilities.

Health

The policy objective of encouraging older people to remain fit and healthy for as long as possible is translated into a target for the proportion of people aged over 65 who undertake sufficient exercise and sport, and a target for the number of falls among the over-65s. The percentage of elderly people taking sufficient exercise increased between 2000 and 2005. For people aged over 18, the norm has been set at half an hour of moderately intensive physical activity on at least five days per week. The target of 45% of people aged over 65 attaining this norm was achieved in 2004, and the target of 50% by 2010 was achieved as early as 2005. It is only in the group of over-65s who assess their health as poor that a minority (21%) achieve the exercise normal.

After correction for population profile, a downward trend in the number of falls by the elderly can be observed in the period 2002-2006. This downward trend is in line with the target reduction of approximately 6%. One exception is formed by elderly people in institutions, where the number of falls increased sharply (by 17%) in the period 2002-2006.

Care

Older people who become vulnerable due to health problems must be assured of sufficient care of good quality. This policy objective is translated into the largest number of targets: one for sufficient care (waiting list reduction for nursing, care and home care) and four targets relating to quality, in particular in relation to nursing home care. It is unknown whether the target for waiting list reduction has been achieved, due to changed definitions and changes in the way waiting list data are

recorded. Two of the quality targets have been achieved; in the case of the fourth this cannot be determined. As regards measuring client satisfaction through client surveys in nursing and care homes, the target of 100% was set to be achieved in 2007. Client satisfaction was measured in 87% of nursing and care homes in 2005, well above the derived target of 71%. The first care accommodation quality target, aimed at eliminating all nursing home rooms with more than two beds by 2006, has not been achieved. In 2006, 16,200 multiple-bed units (74%) had been eliminated. With regard to the second care accommodation target, aimed at creating small-scale living units for people with dementia, the government has set a target of 20% of the total capacity of psychogeriatric care by 2010. Forecasts suggest that this target will be achieved. In relation to the demand for places for people with dementia, the proportion of small-scale living units will increase from 10% in 2005 to 25% in 2010. The target for quality of care delivery relates to the number of nursing homes which meet the professional quality standards set by the Dutch Health Care Inspectorate (IGZ). The IGZ and the field jointly developed new standards in 2006 and 2007, which means it is not possible to determine whether or not the target has been achieved.

Dying with dignity

The policy objective of enabling people to die with dignity is translated into four targets in relation to the facilitation and organisation of palliative care: 1) integration of palliative end of life care in networks of palliative carers, 2) national coverage by palliative care consultation facilities, 3) the setting up of palliative care departments in Integral Cancer Centres (IKCs); and 4) the creation of a new role for Integral Cancer Centres. At the time of the formulation of Memorandum 64, the targets for dying with dignity had already been achieved. For targets 2 and 3, the maximum score was achieved in 2005. Target 1 had achieved a score of 91% in 2006. As regards target 4, all Integral Cancer Centres are largely or completely fulfilling their role. The four-component target for palliative care has thus been achieved.

Critique and suggestions

In response to the second question, 'Are the proposed indicators suitable for future monitoring or do they need improvement?', we observe a number of shortcomings in the target-based approach set out in Memorandum 64, and put forward a number of suggestions for improvement. The shortcomings relate to the following points:

- The Monitor lacks a uniform unit of measurement. The targets in Memorandum 64 are based on dissimilar figures (on supply, demand, take-up, satisfaction, phase of policy implementation).
- The targets use different time horizons, varying from 2006 to 2030.
- Different age limits have been used in formulating the targets (over-55, 55-64 years, over-65), and in a few cases no age limit is applied ('care').
- The present Monitor describes the achievement of targets, but does not explain why they have or have not been achieved.

- The Monitor does not play a signal function with respect to new developments in the life situation and well-being of the elderly.
- There is a lack of cohesion between the targets in the different policy domains, whereas from the perspective of the elderly health, work, housing, transport and care are closely interrelated in their lives.

Based on these points of criticism, we put forward a number of suggestions for improving future Monitors:

- Choose measurement units that are related to the perspective of the elderly (e.g. use of provisions, choice of healthy lifestyles).
- Choose targets which can reveal changes over the medium term of between two and five years.
- Use the lowest age limit of ‘over-55’ for all targets and three phases of life based on three age categories: 55-64 years, 65-74 years and 75 years and older. Targets do not need to apply for every age group, nor do they all need to be the same.
- Offer more explanation on the achievement of targets by showing differences between subgroups of older people and by mirroring the changes found against trends in the longer term.
- In addition to targets and associated policy-specific indicators, also use a number of generic indicators which have a signal function in revealing how the elderly in the Netherlands are faring. For example, statistical trends in the life situation and happiness of the elderly highlight the fact that the material circumstances of the elderly have improved over the last ten years, but that a reversal has taken place in the perception of the elderly since 2001.
- Use a conceptual model indicating which domains could be tracked and what the relationship between the targets is.

Tracking changes in the future

The question of how the Monitor could be improved is related to the question of which information it should provide. In concrete terms, the party commissioning the Monitor could make a number of choices on two questions:

- 1 On which elderly people should the Monitor provide information? (All over-55s or just the care-dependent, vulnerable over-75s?);
- 2 Should the Monitor provide information on the process of realising policy or about policy outcomes in terms of the behaviour and perception of the elderly?

Aside from the choices that are made, we put forward proposals on the basis of this study for substantive indicators, some of which build on the indicators contained in Memorandum 64 and some of which are new. The indicators have been arranged using the life situation model (Boelhouwer 2007) by resources, provisions, setting, life situation and participation, and subjective welfare.

The most important resources for the elderly are health, income and education. Monitoring the theme 'staying healthy', in addition to the existing monitoring of healthy lifestyle (proportion of older people who meet the exercise fitness norm) and a relevant outcome measure (proportion of older people falling in one year), could also include a generic health measure which summarises many of the health aspects that are relevant for independent functioning. For monitoring income, the present indicator for purchasing power, which applies only for a small group of single older persons living only on state old-age pension, could be replaced by two indicators which apply for the entire elderly population: 1) the proportion of older people living below the poverty line; and 2) the proportion of over-65s who have a lower standardised income than the average standardised income of people aged below 65. Education could be added as a new indicator.

Under provisions we would include the themes 'sufficient care of good quality', 'dying with dignity', 'housing provision' and 'mobility'. The key with care is that people receive sufficient care of good quality. Whether or not older people in the Netherlands who are in need of help are receiving sufficient care can be deduced with reasonable accuracy from the waiting list records for home care, care home and nursing home places (the nursing, care and home care sector). Quality of care can be accessed from two perspectives: that of the care professionals and that of the service-users. For monitoring dying with dignity, new indicators are being developed within the Netherlands Organisation for Health Research and Development (ZonMw) palliative care programme. In the area of housing provision, we would suggest that the existing indicators for stairless homes and 'supported living', both for older people living independently, be merged to create a set of housing and care indicators with the existing quality indicators 'single-person rooms in nursing homes' and 'small-scale living units for people with dementia', thus generating a profile of four indicators for the residential setting of the elderly, both the large group who live independently and the small group who live in institutions. A new indicator would need to be developed for mobility, which portrays how many elderly people are able to travel from A to B using different forms of private, public and collective transport.

The social setting often determines how long older people are able to continue living independently. Loneliness is one of the biggest complaints of the elderly and can be measured with the commonly used scale for loneliness (De Jong-Gierveld et al. 2008).

Social participation is tracked in the present Monitor in the domains of paid work and voluntary work. An indicator for the proportion of people providing informal care could be added to this. However, participation by the elderly in society encompasses more than just paid and unpaid work. To make the picture of participation by the elderly more complete, an indicator could be added for the proportion of older people taking part in cultural activities.

Conclusion

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this report is that it is possible to track the achievement of policy objectives (and targets) using an *Elderly Policy Monitor*, provided a number of conditions are met. First, the targets need to be empirically based on periodic research. Second, definitions and questionnaires must not be changed in the period being monitored.

This trial edition of the *Elderly Policy Monitor* has been published in place of the periodic SCP *Report on the Elderly* (*Rapportage ouderen*). When carrying out the research for and compiling this trial edition it became clear that there are substantial differences of nuance between an *Elderly Policy Monitor* and a *Report on the Elderly*. Since there is no integral policy on the elderly, the translation of policy on the elderly in different domains into targets that can be monitored empirically results in a fragmented picture of divergent and dissimilar indicators. The *Reports on the Elderly*, by contrast, have devoted attention to the interrelationship of policy from the perspective of the older citizen and have thus highlighted new developments and problem areas in the life situation and well-being of the elderly.

*Always on the move*¹

The living situation and the mobility patterns of the Dutch population

Lucas Harms

A great deal of research is carried out into mobility, applied to a diversity of themes and viewed from the perspective of a variety of scientific disciplines. The majority of this research is also strongly focused on the international scientific circuit, a small world of knowledge in which detailed and complex analyses tend to be the rule rather than the exception. For most policymakers, however, these studies are virtually inaccessible and are as difficult to understand as they are to apply in practice.

At the other extreme is applied scientific research, which answers very specific questions and gives direction to policy: a cost/benefit analysis of major infrastructure projects; a capacity analysis of the railways; or a measurement of traffic emissions alongside motorways. Studies such as these offer direction, focus and practical pointers for policy.

The research which falls between these two extremes consists of exploratory studies and overviews. Studies which ‘mark time’, which offer an overview of knowledge that can serve as a context and as background information for policymakers: a state-of-the-art description of the mobility of the Dutch, the position today and developments in the past and future. In practice, this kind of exploratory and overview research is only provided in the Netherlands by the various planning offices. For example, a study was carried out under the auspices of the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB) on the future mobility of the Dutch (CPB et al. 2006), while the Netherlands Institute for Spatial Research (RPB) carried out research on the influence of spatial development on mobility (see e.g. Hilbers et al. 2004; Hamers & Niebelink 2006). Another player in this field is the recently founded Netherlands Institute for Transport Policy Analysis (KiM), part of the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, which in addition to demand-led research also provides an insight into exploratory studies and social trends (see e.g. KiM 2007; 2008). Then there is the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP, which looks at the life situation of the Dutch, at changes occurring in that situation, and at the effects of those changes on mobility. In recent years, SCP has focused on the following questions, among others:

Which social trends influence demand for mobility? What differences are there in

1 SCP-publication 2008/13

mobility between different population groups? What are people's motives for making journeys? How do they perceive and experience their day-to-day mobility?

This thesis look for answers to these questions, drawing on studies carried out by SCP in this area in recent years. Four aspects were distinguished which can be summarised using the term 'life situation perspective'. The first part of the thesis explores developments in mobility in a broad sense: trends in scientific thinking about mobility (chapter 2); social trends which influence mobility (chapter 3) and trends in activity patterns and mobility (chapter 4). The second part of the thesis explores differences between different population groups in time spent outside the home and mobility. Specifically, it looks at differences between men and women and between younger and older people (chapter 5); differences between ethnic minority and indigenous Dutch citizens (chapter 6); and differences between rural and urban dwellers (chapter 7). The third part devotes attention to the reasons for mobility, with special attention for mobility in leisure time. It explores the extent and scope of leisure time mobility, taking in the context, characteristics and dynamics of leisure traffic (chapters 8-10). The final section explores perceptions and images of daily mobility: how do the Dutch feel about traffic and transport, how do they experience and perceive mobility, and which problems are they confronted with in relation to mobility (chapter 11)?

Scientific thinking about mobility (chapter 2)

Mobility has been studied from numerous perspectives over the years. Initially little in the way of in-depth research was carried out. Derived from traffic planning and large-scale investments in infrastructure, attention was focused on the number and types of journeys people make. For the various modes of transport, these studies looked at how often people travelled, where they travelled to and what distances they travelled. The major disadvantage was that journeys were studied in isolation, without being related to the activity patterns which underlay them. In response to this one-sided perspective, the 'activity-based approach' was developed in from the 1970s onwards. In this new approach, an attempt was made to study journeys as a derivative of activity patterns. More than in the past, mobility was related to the underlying activity patterns and to the associated constraints, possibilities and preferences. One of the most important examples of this approach is the Hägerstrand's time geography. According to this author, mobility is derived from the activities people undertake at fixed points in time and place, such as working or going to school. Supplementary insights were later added to this from the disciplines of psychology, economics, biology and sociology, for example that mobility is not by definition a derived demand, but can also be an end in itself; or the fact that to a certain degree constants can be observed in mobility patterns for which biological and economic principles could be responsible; or the differences in constraints on and possibilities for mobility between different population groups. The common thread running through all of this is people's life situation, and more specifically the bandwidth between the voluntarism of the

individual choices and the determinism of the social constraints, in other words: 'choosing within the ability to choose'. This thesis elaborates on this perspective in several ways, for example by looking at the social determinants of mobility behaviour, the daily rhythms and routines in people's activity patterns, the differences between population groups in the opportunities for and constraints on mobility, and the preferences and motivations which underlie mobility.

Social trends and mobility (chapter 3)

The mobility of the Dutch population is determined by a number of social developments and trends. A first social driver for the growing mobility are demographic trends, such as population growth: the more people there are, the more mobility there will be. A second explanation is offered by socioeconomic trends, such as the increase in prosperity and the associated increase in car ownership; modal incomes have risen considerably in recent decades, while the cost of owning and using a car has fallen. A third key explanation is formed by spatial development: the expansion of the road network and the separation and dispersion of housing and places of employment. The expansion of the road network has greatly reduced travel times and increased people's geographical radius of action. This has made it possible to locate residential and work locations further apart, and made it more feasible than in the past to locate amenities on the periphery of towns.

In addition to demographic, socioeconomic and spatial trends, allowance also had to be made when seeking an explanation for the growth in mobility for social and cultural trends and developments. In concrete terms, this means the changing preferences and needs in relation to family formation, marriage, the position of women, household task sharing, educational and career perspectives, and leisure time use. These preferences and needs exert a direct influence on the way in which people order and structure their daily lives. Chapter 3 identifies four social and cultural trends which can offer a significant additional explanation for the growth in mobility:

- The first trend is individualisation, a far-reaching social development which manifests itself particularly in the decline in the number of members of households. This 'household dilution' leads to more mobility because more external contacts are needed in order to satisfy the needs of the same number of people. Another aspect of individualisation is emancipation, the trend towards a society in which women and men are able to realise equal rights, opportunities, freedoms and responsibilities. This equality is expressed above all in the increase in the labour market participation rate of women and, in association with this, the increase in the number of double-earners – a trend which has boosted the growth in mobility.
- The second trend is intensification of time use patterns. This means that, within a limited time budget, people have become increasingly accustomed to combining several tasks (e.g. work, household and education) and also to experiencing more diverse leisure activities. The consequences for mobility are obvious: more daily tasks and more leisure activities generate more mobility.

- A third trend is the ‘informatisation’ of society: the use of information and communication technology at all levels of society and the changes this brings in knowledge transfer and information exchange. The rise of teleworking and teleshopping are the result. So far, this has not put a brake on mobility; on the contrary: if anything, the use of ICT generates more rather than less mobility.
- The fourth trend is the internationalisation of lifestyle. A key component of this trend is cross-border mobility in connection with holidays and recreation, which has grown enormously in recent decades. In particular, holidays to destinations outside the Netherlands and, in recent years, increasingly outside Europe (by aircraft!) have grown strongly.

All in all, it can be observed that people’s lifestyles have become increasingly individualised, intensified, informatised and internationalised. From the perspective of mobility, this means that people have made themselves more dependent than in the past on travel for fulfilling the activity patterns they undertake. In other words, living in smaller units, the emancipated division of work between men and women, the combining of tasks and the hectic lives this generates, as well as the intensification of leisure time spent outside the home, have all boosted the demand for (car) mobility.

Mobility distributed over time (chapter 4)

In seeking to identify the consequences of social trends on traffic volumes, consideration also needs to be given to the distribution of mobility across the hours and days of the week (the subject of chapter 4). Many of the problems caused by mobility, such as the many daily traffic jams, are after all caused by the fact that too many people are making journeys at the same time. In reality this means that the existing infrastructure is used very inefficiently.

Viewed over the week as a whole, Friday is still the day with the heaviest traffic, as it was in the mid-1970s. The reason for this is the accumulation of commuter traffic, mobility in relation to household and care tasks and leisure travel. Analysis of the distribution of mobility across the day, however, reveals that there are relatively few really busy moments on a Friday; compared with the other weekdays, the traffic is spread slightly more evenly over the day (the peaks are somewhat lower and the troughs shallower). On all weekdays, however, the heaviest traffic is concentrated around eight o’clock in the morning and five o’clock in the evening.

Commuter traffic shows the clearest contrast between peaks and troughs of all travel motives. However, the journey to and from work is somewhat more staggered than in the past. Household and care mobility shows a less clearly concentrated morning and evening rush hour; there are several peaks which together produce an uneven picture. What is striking is that the growth in household and care-related traffic occurs primarily in the morning and afternoon rush hours. The reason for this is

the increased labour market participation, which means that more people fall under the 'temporal discipline' of the working routine and are thus forced to organise their household and care activities immediately before or after their day's work.

The temporal distribution of educational mobility hardly changed between 1975 and 2005. It is characterised by a relatively high morning peak which coincides with the busiest time for commuter traffic, and also by a less pronounced but increasingly busy afternoon peak. Finally there is leisure traffic. Although this form of mobility accounts for the biggest share in total traffic volumes, its spread over the hours of the day shows the fewest peaks. The growth in leisure traffic has however taken place mainly during the afternoon hours.

The general picture is that commuter and education-related peaks are increasingly coinciding with other forms of mobility, including household and leisure traffic. The morning rush-hour contains a relatively higher volume of household and care-related mobility. In the evening rush-hour it is primarily the proportion of leisure mobility that has increased. An earlier study found that social and cultural trends, and in particular the increased share of working women, double-earners and 'task-combiners', have contributed to a further concentration of mobility at the busiest times of the day (Harms 2003a).

The conclusion is that more and more people are travelling more and more often at the same times for more and more diverse reasons. A one-sided solution to the congestion problem, aimed purely at commuter traffic, is therefore likely to be relatively unproductive. The fact that traffic congestion can also be partly traced to trends of a social and cultural nature adds an extra dimension to the battle against traffic jams and makes finding solutions more difficult.

Mobility by age and gender (chapter 5)

For a mobility policy which is aimed at the long term, it is important to take into account the effects of demographic trends, and especially of population ageing. Ideally, a distinction should be made when exploring the effects of age on mobility between the differences in mobility *between* age groups at a given point in time (e.g. older and younger persons in 2005) and differences in mobility *within* age groups between two points in time (e.g. older persons in 1985 and older persons in 2005). In addition to the differences between age cohorts and life phases, it is also possible to look at differences within age groups that are attributable to people's life situation; the differences in life situation between men and women are a good example of this.

Analysis of the differences in mobility by life phase, age cohort and life situation produces the following observations:

- The most mobile group in the Netherlands are people in their thirties. These are

the people in the 'rush hour of life' and are the most frequently outside the home, spend the most time travelling and cover the greatest distances.

- The bicycle is primarily a vehicle for children and teenagers (almost a third of all cycle journeys are undertaken by young people aged up to 18 years); public transport is mainly used by people in their twenties (a third of all train users are aged 18-25 years); while the car dominates among adults aged 25 years and older (roughly a quarter of all car-driver journeys are carried out by 35-55 year-olds).
- Women travel outside the home more than men, but on balance spend less time travelling and cover fewer kilometres.
- The differences between men and women in time spent outside the home and mobility have shrunk steadily in recent decades; women have their own driving licence and their own car more often than in the past. It will therefore come as no surprise that women travel by car much more frequently in 2005 than in 1985, and much more often as the driver than as a passenger. A shift has taken place in the reasons for journeys undertaken by women, from primarily household and care-related journeys to commuting to and from work.
- Older people travel less often, for less time and over a shorter distance than adults aged below 65 years. Above the age of 65, the number of journeys made and kilometres travelled reduces steadily with advancing age. There is a marked fall-off in mobility and time spent outside the home above the age of 70 years, each year falling by roughly 5%.
- Older people have adopted more independent mobility patterns in recent decades. They increasingly use a car for journeys, increasingly do so as the driver, and at an ever increasing age. By contrast, older people are making less and less use of public transport.
- The ageing of the baby-boom generation is a major cause of the changes in mobility, and one which also has implications for developments in the future. Population ageing means there will initially be an increase in leisure travel, with independent forms of mobility being used more than at present, such as the car and the bicycle. When the double ageing process begins in due course, the out of home activities of the baby boom generation will increasingly be characterised by 'dependence'. Vulnerability and traffic safety will then also become increasingly important issues.

Mobility of ethnic minorities (chapter 6)

Members of ethnic minorities travel less than the indigenous population and also cover fewer kilometres in roughly the same time period. Their less frequent mobility is explained entirely by the fact that Turkish and Moroccan women, in particular, leave the home less often.

Compared with the indigenous population, immigrants less often use cars and bicycles, and more frequently use public transport. The differences in car use can

be explained in part by the social and geographical characteristics of the groups concerned. This does not apply for the Turkish community, however: given the same social and geographical characteristics, they actually travel more by car than the indigenous Dutch. Public transport is used relatively heavily by members of ethnic minorities, especially Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans. By contrast, bicycles are not widely used by any ethnic minority groups, even after controlling for social and geographical background characteristics. Differences between men and women do however play an important distinguishing role here: ethnic minority women use public transport more often and bicycles much less often than indigenous women. Among men, the differences between ethnic minority and indigenous groups are much smaller for both public transport and bicycle use. Possible explanations for the low use of bicycles by ethnic minority women are the low status of this mode of transport, the perceived danger of accidents involving bicycles, and culture-specific factors, such as not being able to ride a bicycle and not being allowed to do so because of tradition or religious belief, or simply not being used to cycling.

Mobility of rural dwellers (chapter 7)

People who live in the countryside travel more often and over greater distances than people who live in urban areas. In contrast to town-dwellers, they mainly use a car for this. More and more rural households have a second and sometimes even a third car; fewer and fewer households do not have a car at all. At the same time, the availability of alternatives to the car in the countryside has diminished: 'traditional', regular scheduled public transport services have been dwindling steadily in recent years.

It has thus become increasingly difficult to live in the countryside without a car, but also increasingly rare. True 'transport poverty' is limited to a small group of people living alone, primarily older women without a driving licence. They are forced to rely for their journeys on family and friends or on the *regiotaxi* shared-ride taxi scheme, a transport service which is offered in many areas as a replacement for district buses. However, evaluation studies of the *regiotaxi* scheme show that it is used almost exclusively by people with functional impairments, who are able to use the service at reduced rates on the grounds of the Social Support Act (WMO). The *regiotaxi* is thus not a success as a full substitute for scheduled public transport services, and as a means of combating transport poverty is successful to only a limited extent. Rural dwellers in transport poverty and without functional impairments, such as a proportion of people aged over 65 without a car, can only use the on-demand door-to-door connections offered by the service at the normal, relatively expensive rates. With the exception of rural dwellers who have no access to alternatives, this will inevitably prompt many of them sooner or later to switch to using a car.

Yet the growing car dependency of rural dwellers is not seen as a problem in government policy. In fact, policy memoranda explicitly state that the car is ideally suited to

the social functioning of the rural population. Not only do cars offer benefits such as speed and flexibility in the countryside, but they are also free of the disadvantages that so typify their use in urban areas, such as traffic jams, lack of space and environmental pollution.

Naturally, the success of the car does not give carte blanche for spending cuts on the alternatives. In order to prevent structural transport poverty among a small and shrinking minority of the rural population, allowance needs to be made now and in the future for the need for alternative transport provisions.

Mobility in leisure time (chapters 8-10)

Leisure is the most important source of mobility, accounting for almost two-fifths of all journeys and more than two-fifths of all kilometres travelled. That is considerably more than the traffic generated by commuter traffic, and even much more than all household trips. Long queues of traffic for amusement parks and events, large numbers of visitors to shopping centres on Sundays, or to festivals, artificial ski slopes and karting circuits, congestion around furniture malls and factory outlet stores, are all becoming increasingly common. Yet research and policy documents devote virtually no attention to leisure traffic. Leisure time research is mainly concerned with the activities carried out at the destinations, while mobility research and policy focus primarily on commuter traffic.

Context

It has become increasingly easy in recent decades to visit leisure amenities and attractions. The Dutch have a lot of time and a lot of money, can travel greater distances more easily and more rapidly, and have access to more information and more leisure amenities than ever before. And although the amount of free time per head of the population has been falling slightly since the mid-1980s, this is more than offset by the fact that people have more money, more (i.e. faster) mobility, and more (potential) leisure destinations from which to choose.

The strong growth in the opportunities for participating in leisure activities outside the home has brought about a transformation in leisure time and leisure time mobility, from an elite phenomenon to a mass product.

Characteristics

Leisure time takes a large share of total mobility, accounting for 38% of all journeys and 44% of all kilometres travelled. Visits to friends and family, in particular, involve travelling long distances, but recreational journeys such as walking and cycling also generate a high volume of mobility. In total, the Dutch make 6.6 billion leisure journeys on an annual basis, covering a total of 82 billion kilometres (almost 2 million times around the world). In reality these figures are actually much higher

still, because the data source from which the numbers are derived does not permit statements to be made about the extent of mobility in connection with recreational shopping. Another data source suggests that 'fun shopping' accounts for a high proportion of the total number of day trips made by the Dutch and involves a large number of kilometres. The car is the most commonly used mode of leisure transport, both in proportion to the number of journeys and to the number of kilometres travelled: with more than half of all journeys and 80% of kilometres travelled involving the car, leisure time has to a certain extent become synonymous with car time. Cycling, and especially walking, are much less common. Public transport takes a marginal share of leisure journeys, and where it is used, it is mainly to reach destinations in urban areas.

Dynamic

The geographical, temporal and social scope of leisure mobility has increased enormously in recent decades. The Dutch now travel much greater distances, increasingly on days other than Sunday, and more and more often they are also people other than just the prosperous members of the population.

In line with trends in recent years, the expectation for the coming decades is that the volume of leisure mobility will increase further, at least in absolute terms. There are likely to be more people in the future visiting more diverse destinations over ever greater distances, and using the car more often than they do now in order to do so. The Dutch are also likely to travel at a greater variety of times, including in the mornings and at the weekend, as well as in the daytime during the week. To some extent this is the result of increasing congestion at the busiest times during the weekend, but is also due to the disappearance of fixed rhythms and routines for the growing group of older people, for whom leisure travel during the week will become possible.

The increasing leisure mobility is however likely to have little impact on the accessibility and reliability of the road infrastructure. It is in any event unlikely that more leisure traffic will result in more traffic jams on the main road network during the working week. However, while leisure activity may not generate problems for mobility as a whole, the total mobility will conversely increasingly pose an obstacle to travel in leisure time. The growing traffic volumes will prove to be a serious obstacle in the coming decades to the accessibility of leisure destinations.

Perceptions and image of mobility (chapter 11)

Which mode of transport do the Dutch prefer? What are their opinions about the car, the bicycle and public transport? What feelings and emotions do they associate with these alternatives? Chapter 11 shows that two-thirds of all Dutch people (67%) regard the car as the most appealing means of transport. The bicycle is the preferred mode of transport for just over a quarter (27%) of the population, while 4% regard public transport as the most appealing alternative. In addition, the car and the bicycle are

valued most highly by the Dutch, with 86% and 84%, respectively, having a positive opinion. Public transport receives a lower score; just over a quarter (26%) take a positive view, while more than half (51%) hold a negative opinion.

Explanations for differences in the attraction of the car, the bicycle and public transport can be traced partly to product characteristics such as speed, costs, comfort and aspects such as independence and flexibility. To a much greater extent than public transport and the bicycle, the car offers convenience, independence, flexibility, comfort, pleasure, safety and also speed. People's views on the bicycle are also predominantly positive: in particular the low costs of cycle use is appreciated, but also 'always being on time' and 'being alone'. The bicycle is moreover relatively immune to associations with irritations and delays, something which seems to be the preserve of public transport. Public transport is viewed less positively across the board, especially by those who make little or no use of it, but also by users themselves. One factor that plays a role here is that public transport has only a 'utility value', whereas the car and the bicycle also have an 'ownership value', so that people more readily identify with these modes of transport and are able to derive status from them, for example.

Perceptions and image depend not only on product characteristics, but also on personal characteristics such as age and gender. First there is the difference between men and women; women are milder than men in their views on the quality of public transport, and also see the bicycle as a realistic alternative slightly more often than men. Second, there are differences in perception according to age: the car is especially popular among the young, while older people take a more positive view of public transport. Thirdly, there are also differences based on geographical characteristics; rural dwellers are for example more often positive in their views about the car, and less frequently express positive views about public transport.

A final important finding of the study concerns the relationship between perception and use. The more often people use the car, the bicycle and public transport, the more positive their views of this mode of transport become. This applies especially for public transport: of those people who make little or no use of it, 62% have a negative image of public transport; by contrast, of those who travel by public transport several times a week, a majority (56%) have a positive view. On the other hand, almost a quarter (24%) of frequent users do have a negative opinion of public transport. By way of comparison, the number of negative opinions about the car and the bicycle is almost negligible among frequent users (3% and 1%, respectively).

School governance¹

School boards on good governance and the social task of the school Context of the study

Monique Turkenburg

New administrative arrangements in education: more powers for school boards

In recent years, the government has been delegating more tasks and responsibilities to school boards. This process of decentralisation, which is still in full swing, is sometimes referred to as 'more autonomy for schools'. It means that the government will henceforth play more of a backseat role and give more freedom for making decisions to schools themselves or, more accurately, to school boards as the competent authority. It is after all school boards that are ultimately responsible for what happens in the school, and therefore also for the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils. As with all processes of decentralisation, the key question is which administrative scale and which degree of autonomy offer the best guarantee for – in this case – good education, satisfied teachers, parents and pupils, a varied range of courses and more effective and efficient deployment of resources. In the 1990s the emphasis in education was on the devolution of tasks to local authorities, as for example in the policy on educational disadvantage. From around 2002, under the previous government, the role of school boards in particular underwent a change. An underlying question in the present study is whether this shift in responsibilities and powers is a good thing or whether there is a need for critical comment.

Little known about the role and views of school boards

This study is concerned with the question of how primary and secondary school boards are embracing their increasing autonomy. It is too early for a genuine evaluation study; as stated, the process is still in full swing. However, in order to be able to assess the possible implications of this functional decentralisation, it is important to obtain a clearer view of these key players in the new administrative arrangement. Until now, little was known about school boards in the primary and secondary sectors. In the first place, this study presents an overview at national level of how school boards interpret and fulfil their role and tasks; more and different demands are being placed on the new role of school boards, for example in relation to transparency and the notion of 'multiple public accountability'. In the second place, this study answers the question of how school boards themselves feel about their new

role and about the associated conditions for good governance, and to what extent they are perhaps already responding to the change. Are all school boards prepared for this change? Finally, the study shows how far school boards feel their social responsibility extends and to what extent they are aware of socially desirable objectives: their 'social task'. As the ability of the government to guarantee attention for such social objectives through education declines, this question is becoming more and more important.

The school boards in this study

The study involved 500 primary and secondary school boards, just under a third of the total number of school boards in these sectors. The boards included in the study completed a written questionnaire on the above themes in 2007.

Main findings and answers to central questions

The administrative landscape

The first study question, which sought to provide a greater insight into the diversity of school boards, was as follows:

- What, generally speaking, are the most important characteristics of primary and secondary school boards in the method of organisation, management and division of tasks between school boards and school management teams?

Wide differences between boards in terms of size, legal form and denomination

Primary and secondary school boards can vary enormously. An average school board looking after one primary school differs considerably from a board governing several secondary schools, or even from a board with just one secondary school. For example, where a one-school board in the primary education sector will have an average of around 200 pupils in its charge, for a secondary school board that number can easily reach 1,700, though the number of pupils per school is generally half this. This study was mainly concerned with the 'scale' of the school board, in the sense of the number of schools under its governance. Roughly half of all primary school boards and around three-quarters of school boards in the secondary sector are responsible for only one school. This means that all other boards manage more than one school; in some cases boards are responsible for several dozen.

There are also differences in the legal form of school boards which are of relevance for this study mainly in terms of the democratic legitimacy and ownership of the school – to which we shall return later. Boards of Protestant schools normally take the form of an association, while boards of Catholic schools tend to be foundations. In the state sector, school boards are being given autonomy on a large scale, generally entailing a transformation from an integral board to a public foundation.

School boards also differ in terms of the denomination or focus of the schools they manage. The assumption in the study was that these differences could also

influence the way in which a school board defines its mission, interprets the moral ownership of the school and is willing to accept and be accountable for social tasks.

Hardly any board members are recruited through a completely open procedure

The majority of primary and secondary school boards consist of volunteers, and in most cases these are not full-time posts. It is not easy to find people willing to participate in school boards; one in five secondary school boards actually describe it as extremely difficult, as do one in four primary school boards. It does have to be borne in mind here that only a minority of boards attempt to recruit new members via an open procedure; around 14% of primary school boards and 24% of secondary school boards recruit new members using a procedure that is completely open. The majority of boards look for new members on recommendation by an existing board member, a member of the supervisory board or of the participation council (co-optation). Boards generally seek members with specific or general administrative skills. On between around 15% and 40% of school boards, the members consist largely of people who themselves were once employed in education.

Boards mainly govern at a distance

Boards most commonly adopt a 'board of management' model, setting the main frameworks and delegating tasks and powers to the school management team. Half of all school boards operate such a model. Primary school boards in charge of only one school often operate a traditional model, with the board bearing ultimate responsibility and the management team carrying out the hands-on management tasks. The supervisory board model is operated by 11% of school boards, especially in secondary education, and a number of boards are also currently transforming their present organisation to this model; it is not unlikely that many boards which say they currently govern from a distance and impose retrospective accountability are already more or less fulfilling a supervisory role, with many of the actual management tasks having been delegated to their management teams. Two-thirds of school boards say that – regardless of the model chosen – they govern in broad outline, setting frameworks with retrospective accountability from school management teams. Boards operating a supervisory board model, by contrast, more often focus their governance on specifics and policy; here, the supervisory role has already been separated from the administrative task.

Busy times ahead for school boards; severe pressure for some boards

School boards are currently having to deal with a great many issues; some of those issues require a very great deal of attention, such as the recently introduced lump-sum funding system for primary schools and the concerns about accommodation in both the primary and secondary sectors – almost half of all school boards have problems here! – as well as having to translate the quality policy into practice. Administrative upscaling is still going on, especially in the primary education sector, where a quarter of school boards are currently engaged in or have recently completed a

merger. In a small minority of school boards (between 4% and 7%), all attention is focused on a specific serious problem, such as poor pupil achievement at their school, the threat of closure, financial problems or unpleasant incidents or conflicts.

Who owns the school?

There is an ideologically tinted difference of opinion between boards concerning the moral ownership of the school, and this works through into the way in which the board views its role. Some boards feel that society is the owner of the school, while others consider parents to be the owners. These views help determine the willingness of the board to respond to wishes and demands from society or from parents, respectively. The school stakeholders to which the boards are willing to render public account are also determined by these views on ownership. Primary school boards with one school under their governance, and boards of Protestant schools (predominantly associations who represent their members) generally tend to consider parents as the owners of the school. By contrast, secondary school boards much more often take the view that society is the owner of the school. These views determine which group in society the board looks to for its lead.

Boards were also asked about important aspects of their mission, and here too it was found that there are differences between boards depending on their denomination. At Protestant schools, the religious identity is very important, while for boards in the state sector an open admissions policy is essential.

School boards often leave the initiative to the school management team; does this guarantee the autonomy of the school?

School boards generally take a neutral stance in the practical division of tasks between the board and the school management team. The board is mainly active in areas such as mergers or establishment policy. Although the school board ultimately takes the decisions in many cases, it is the school management team which takes the initiative. This definitely applies for topics in relation to the social task of the school.

Almost three-quarters of school boards are content to leave the school to do what it is good at. This could be an indication that the autonomy of the school itself is guaranteed by the board. Discussions on the new relations in the education system sometimes reveal doubt about whether 'more autonomy for the school' actually relates to the school management team, or whether in practice it mainly boils down to more autonomy for the competent authority – i.e. the school board. Half the boards questioned, however, disagreed with this latter suggestion. 80% of school boards believe that the position of school head will become more attractive due to the greater autonomy; two-thirds of boards also believe that the position of school board members will also benefit, while 44% believe that this also applies for the posts of teacher or lecturer.

Limited information-gathering; little control focusing on specifics

It may be assumed that, in order to perform its tasks adequately, a school board must

be well-informed about its school. In many cases, however, the provision and utilisation of information is limited. Teachers, pupils and non-teaching staff are not really seen as a source of information, probably because school boards primarily receive information in a passive fashion, generally from their school management team, and less often actively solicit information themselves. Explanatory analyses revealed that school boards which do actively seek information, and which more frequently consult a variety of sources, also show more initiative in the way they govern.

An important question in relation to decentralisation is whether it will prompt school boards to govern their schools in a more targeted way. After all, the decision to decentralise is often taken because it is felt that control from the centre is not specific enough and leaves too little scope for schools to respond to their specific local situation. Several methods have been used to explore whether school boards do indeed aim for customisation. Financial policy means that just over half the school boards govern their different schools in (partially) differing ways, by giving extra money to individual schools for innovation or where there are serious problems. Two out of five boards, however, adopt the principle of 'distributive justice', in which all schools receive money according to the funding norms.

Most school boards pursue a generic policy, in which they govern all schools in more or less the same way. Specific governance is more common in secondary schools, especially where there are a large boards operating a supervisory board model.

New administrative framework

The second study question was concerned specifically with the new administrative framework and good governance.

- *How do boards put the new administrative arrangement into practice, characterised by more autonomy for the school and the board and by a different accountability structure, and how do they interpret 'good governance'?*

Wide-ranging administrative reorganisations

Are school boards moving to transform their administrative organisation in the light of the new arrangements? This was indeed found to be the case: a third of boards reported that they are planning an administrative reorganisation in the near future, while more than a quarter stated that they had recently completed such a reorganisation. A third of boards – including many primary school boards governing just one school – say that there is no reason for change, because everything is running perfectly well. It remains to be seen whether this attitude proves correct, because these boards, too, are being given greater autonomy and are being confronted with the associated demands in terms of transparency of governance, as well as with a different accountability structure. On the other hand, most boards

recognise that there is a need for changes in their administrative organisation, while many boards recognise a need for further professionalisation.

Good governance is about quality

The new administrative arrangements in primary and secondary education are characterised by greater scope or autonomy for school boards. At the same time, more and more demands are being imposed on boards, for example in respect of transparency of governance. A great deal has been written about governance, and about what constitutes good governance in the private and (semi-) state sector. In this study, school boards were asked how they themselves interpret good governance. Many boards share the same views on this; for example, they consider quality standards and a good image for the school to be much more important than quantitative criteria such as having more schools or more pupils. Large, professional boards attach greater importance to transparency. Boards governing just one school in the primary education sector attach more value to 'soft' criteria such as a good atmosphere in the school and in the team, unity of purpose between school management team and school board, and low staff turnover. It is striking that, for more than half the boards, the degree to which their schools respond to all kinds of social demands or problems is also a criterion of good governance; by contrast, two out of three boards do not regard it as important to render account on the degree to which their schools heed calls for a broader social task.

Small boards modest in their desire for autonomy; large boards enthusiastic and ambitious

One in three school boards are unreservedly enthusiastic about more autonomy; they expect it to enable them to realise their ambitions more effectively. This is the case for large boards, often operating a supervisory board model. Small boards in the primary education sector, often of Protestant schools, are by contrast more modest in their desire for autonomy. Many of these boards would prefer to outsource a number of tasks, probably reflecting a realistic assessment of their own administrative capacity. Secondary school boards do want more autonomy, with the exception of boards with a serious problem at their school.

Giving more autonomy to schools and school boards is also intended to lead to a more differentiated educational offering. Just under half the boards are already responding to the market by giving their school a particular profile – often a specific educational approach or an extensive cultural offering. Just over a one in five boards, mainly in the four largest cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht), are embracing 'new learning' at one or more of their schools.

The majority of boards say they are already ready for more autonomy; however, it is by no means the case that the internal supervisory task has been separated from the administrative task on every board: 43% of boards are still exploring the implications of this separation of tasks and 19% reported that they were not even aware that this separation had to be implemented. On more than half of all school boards,

therefore, this condition for transparent administration is currently not being met. Large boards with a supervisory board model more often report that they are ready for the new administrative arrangement; naturally, these boards have already complied with the required segregation of tasks.

A tentative start on horizontal accountability

Another principle in the new administrative arrangement entails a change in the accountability structure. Horizontal accountability is becoming more and more commonplace, but is something of a confusing notion. It is often interpreted as legitimisation and accountability, whereas in fact it is concerned more with schools and school boards learning from the relationship with stakeholders in the local setting, and recognising the added value that those relationships can have for the education provided (Onderwijsraad 2006). It would perhaps be more accurate to speak of a horizontal dialogue, as proposed by the Independent Committee on the Governance Code in the Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education sector (Onafhankelijke commissie governance code BVE (2006)). One in five school boards say they are already actively involved in horizontal accountability; just under half say they are doing something about this, while a small minority (10%) say they are not aware of this development. The boards which say they engage in horizontal accountability do so mainly via their annual report; a much smaller proportion actively inform or engage in discussion with those around them (horizontal dialogue). There appears to be no question of rendering account here. Boards often think of the 'traditional' players when it comes to their accountability: the school management team, the participation councils, the overarching school management bodies and, slightly less often, parents and teachers. These players are also described as the priority stakeholders (Hooze & Helderman 2007). One in five school boards do not consider parents to be a logical party to involve in this dialogue; 40% hold the same view about teachers.

As expected, the views on the moral ownership of the school correlate with the willingness of the board to render public account. Boards which place the ownership of the school with the parents are less willing to be accountable to a wider public, while boards which believe that the community is the owner of the school are by contrast willing to render account on a wide range of public fronts, to more parties and on more issues.

Many critical comments concerning the new administrative arrangement

School boards generally do not expect a great deal from this administrative change. For example, no fewer than two-thirds of boards think the change is more likely to increase rather than reduce bureaucracy, whereas it is the precise aim of the government to shield the education system from too many rules and too much bureaucracy. Roughly half the boards also believe that there is still too much government regulation. Two out of five boards feel that many school boards still have insufficient administrative capacity. Finally, one in five boards do not believe that this change

in the administrative arrangements will lead to better quality of education, which is ultimately the point of it all.

The social task of the school

The third study question is concerned with the opinions and choices of school boards in the light of the increasing pressure on schools to respond to the most diverse demands and wishes of parents, society and politicians.

- *How much importance do school boards attach to their school not only providing good education but also fulfilling a wider social task, and to what extent are the boards themselves aware of such social themes?*

In an earlier exploratory study, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP attempted to identify what the social task of the school should be taken to mean in practice (Turkenburg 2005). The central question in this study is what school boards consider to be a mainstream task of the school (and what they do not), and what they think about the securing of the broader social objectives via education. Do the boards themselves also actively respond to this? The expectation was that boards would vary from a narrow focus, exclusively concentrating on the core tasks of the school, to a very broad focus in which boards assigned the school a whole gamut of social tasks.

In which fields is a task envisaged for the school?

Most of the social themes identified are regarded by school boards to a greater or lesser extent as forming part of the normal tasks of the school. This applies, for example, for many themes relating to upbringing, care and assistance, combating disadvantage, safety and social cohesion, moral development, citizenship, culture, sport and exercise and additional provision for gifted pupils. On the other hand, even in the area of childcare, something which schools are now required by law to offer, by no means all school boards consider this to be a task for the school; fewer than a third of primary school boards consider childcare to be a mainstream task for the school. Just over a third of school boards do not believe that the ‘voluntary placement’, which is not yet a statutory requirement, forms part of the normal tasks of the school.

The initiative for the social task lies with the school itself

The majority of school boards believe that their schools devote sufficient attention to these social themes, though according to some boards their schools sometimes fall short on this. Discrepancies can be observed in virtually all areas between what boards consider to be a mainstream task for their school and the attention their own school actually devotes to that theme. In most cases, however, these discrepancies are small; the biggest discrepancy between the view of the board and the attention

given by their school to a social issue relates to the provision for gifted pupils; 91% of boards regard this as a logical task for the school, while at the same time 42% reported that their own school does not yet offer such provision.

Half the boards leave the decision on whether or not their school will respond to all manner of social demands and wishes entirely to the school. More than one in five boards regard it as desirable that their school should respond, but do not make it compulsory for them to do so, while fewer than one in five boards give specific direction to their school on this point and explicitly see this as a task for the board. Roughly one in ten boards actually try to protect their schools from having to take part in too many extra activities. Depending on how school boards feel about the ownership of the school, they are willing to give their school a very broad social task (the school is owned by the community) or a more limited task (the school belongs to the parents).

Limits to the social task of the school

There are limits to what schools can do. According to school boards, these extra tasks must never put the primary task of the school under pressure, and in particular schools which are performing weakly would do well to limit themselves to their core tasks, in the view of boards. Boards of Protestant schools appear to be less inclined to fulfil a very broad social task. This may be because these boards listen mainly to the parents, who perhaps do not want such a broad offering. It is mainly the genuinely a large boards operating a supervisory board model which actively encourage their schools to fulfil a broader social task and to take on additional duties. In these cases it is the boards themselves which actively solicit information in order to direct their schools.

Boards which embrace the new arrangement are also more responsive

Which boards are more willing to respond to broader social demands? The degree to which school boards are sensitive to social demands and themes is described in this study as their responsiveness. It was found in the study that boards which place ownership of the school with the parents, but also those which regard the board itself as the owner of the school, are less responsive than boards which regard the community as the owner of the school. Paid boards are much more responsive than voluntary boards, and the same applies for boards from the four largest cities: they have a greater affinity with broader social interests. Boards which would like more autonomy in order to achieve their ambitions and which say they are entirely ready for the new administrative arrangement are also more responsive in encouraging their school to fulfil a broader social task.

A few concluding remarks

This study has shown that school governance is in the thick of change. It is accordingly too early to draw up a status report. On the other hand, there is a pertinent

question as to whether it would not have been better to ensure that certain aspects were properly covered before leaving everything to the school boards.

It has to be borne in mind that processes such as this take time. Some school boards are already further ahead in their thinking than others. There appears to be a world of difference between the powerful, professional boards and the small voluntary boards, some of which actually appear to be barely aware of the administrative changes. Many school boards will have to adapt their organisational structure and embrace their new role. In addition, primary school boards will first have to become familiar with the concept of lump-sum funding in order to be able to make full use of their new-found autonomy.

Professionalisation of both school boards and school management teams is necessary. In addition, it is highly likely that a certain administrative scale is needed, though it is not possible to say in advance what constitutes the ideal size for a school board. Small boards in particular – and especially many of those in the primary education sector – will have to give consideration to increasing their administrative scale and to further professionalisation. Large professional boards can set an example here. However, it is more likely that small boards will wish to find their own ways of doing this, perhaps through cooperation between several boards of single schools, with support from the sector board or the overarching bodies.

A great deal of confusion remains as regards horizontal accountability, which school boards are so far embracing it to only a very limited extent.

Another dilemma is who oversees the boards. It seems likely that most primary and secondary school boards will opt for an administrative model with a separate supervisory board (an organic division, also known as the two-tier model) or, if they are too small in scale for this, a functional separation. This will entail a division of tasks: governance and supervisory tasks will both be carried out within one and the same board or competent authority, but each will be performed by different individuals (the one-tier model). This separation is seen as a condition for good governance and is likely to become a statutory requirement in the near future. This separation is also necessary from the point of view of transparency, but will not resolve all the problems. The problem will simply be displaced, because the question now is no longer ‘who oversees the board?’ but ‘who ensures that the supervisors perform their task properly?’ – assuming that the internal supervisor oversees the board.

Another equally important question is ‘who appoints the supervisor?’. Although co-optation is currently quite commonplace, it is not desirable from the perspective of good governance. All educational sectors have now developed their own good governance code. That is a start, but the key issue is of course that the code is observed.

Social safety unlocked¹

Presumed and actual effects of safety policy

Lonneke van Noije and Karin Wittebrood

Increasing social safety – i.e. reducing actual crime and nuisance as well as improving perceived or subjective safety – has been high on the government list of policy priorities since the launch in 2002 of the Safety Programme (*Naar een veiliger samenleving* – ‘Towards a safer society’) by the first government under Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende. Attention in this Programme focuses mainly on those forms of crime and nuisance which affect citizens and companies/institutions in the public space. The successive Balkenende governments have targeted a national reduction in crime and nuisance of 25% between 2006 and 2010 (compared with 2002). Perceived safety must also increase substantially in this period.

When the fourth Balkenende government took office in early 2007, the general impression was that a great deal had been set in motion and achieved with the 2002 Safety Programme: the Netherlands has become safer and crimes against citizens and businesses have fallen. The project ‘Safety starts with Prevention’ (*Veiligheid begint bij Voorkomen*) has recently replaced the 2002 Safety Programme. The Balkenende IV government has however indicated that the objectives formulated in that Safety Programme will remain in force and that, where necessary, introduced measures will be continued.

The optimism voiced about the effectiveness of the Safety Programme was not universally shared. In 2006 the Netherlands Court of Audit stressed that ‘it is virtually impossible to determine what contribution central government policy makes to resolving the social issues for which that policy is deployed’ and that ‘there is no solid substantiation of the relationship between resources, measures and desired effects’ (TK 2005/2006a: 6).

Partly based on the study by the Netherlands Court of Audit and the recommendations derived from it, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations and the Minister of Justice, supported by the Minister of Finance, decided to initiate a research programme to investigate the ‘social costs of safety’ (*Maatschappelijke Kosten van Veiligheid*). On the one hand, this research is intended to meet the criticism by the Court of Audit that there is no theory underpinning the policy, that the policy is insufficiently substantiated and that there is insufficient information on the amount of money spent on safety. On the other hand, the ministers concerned wish

to use the research findings to obtain a better insight into the returns on investments in safety, thus providing a more solid basis for future policy choices. The first phase of the research programme involves the performance of an analysis of the presumed and actual effects of safety policy. The result of that analysis is described in this study, which focuses on three central research questions:

1. Which assumptions underlie social safety policy?
2. To what extent and in what way are the measures taken effective?
3. How plausible are the assumptions which underlie social safety policy?

In chapter 9 we answer each of these research questions in detail and also put forward suggestions for future safety policy as well as recommendations for further research. In this summary we answer the three research questions in broad outline.

Which assumptions underlie social safety policy?

The government uses a variety of measures to increase social safety, varying from more police on the streets and the use of camera surveillance to providing care and support for at-risk young people and imposing harsher penalties. Preventive effects are expected from all these measures. In other words, it is assumed that implementing these measures will reduce crime and nuisance in the future. It is also expected that these same measures will cause citizens to feel safer. The measures taken can be categorised within a number of strategies intended to increase social safety. In this study we distinguish three main categories: (1) law enforcement; 2) developmental prevention; and (3) situational prevention. In addition, we devote attention to systemic measures, which occupy an important place within the Safety Programme.

Law enforcement

The most important general assumption underlying law enforcement is that it has both a specific and a general preventive effect and that this contributes to the restoration of the legal order. The Safety Programme frequently refers to intensification within the mainstream law enforcement system. There are two central target groups in the Safety Programme: frequent offenders and young people. However, some of the assumptions also apply to the offender population as a whole. In the first place, the Programme aims to increase the chance of offenders being caught, arguing that too many non-interventions undermine the deterrent effect of sanctions, reduce the effectiveness of sanctions imposed, and dent the credibility of the law enforcement system. In the second place, there is an assumption that shortening the throughput times within the judicial system and therefore being able to impose penalties more quickly will increase the effectiveness of the sanctions imposed, thus reducing recidivism. In the third place there is the assumption that ‘customisation’ in the application of sanctions reduces the chance of recidivism: by opting for person-specific rather than offence-specific sanctions, it is argued, both the sanctions and the aftercare will be made more effective.

Developmental prevention

In the second strategy, the general assumption is that individual offending behaviour is determined by a combination of factors including life situation, peer pressure, the quality of parenting and future prospects. According to this view, the success of interventions depends partly on how early those interventions take place. Consequently, measures in this strategy are targeted mainly at young people. The Safety Programme cites risk factors for youth crime (such as premature school drop-out, poor command of the Dutch language, unemployment and alcohol and drug abuse). It also stresses the need to ensure positive development by young people, for example by providing help and support. The details and implementation are however largely left to the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (vws), the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OC&W) and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (szw) in the case of young people who have not (yet) come into contact with the police. Some interventions, especially those involving the provision of assistance, can also form part of a sanction and therefore fall within the law enforcement strategy.

Situational prevention

The strategy of situational prevention is based on the idea that modifying the 'opportunity structure' - for example by making it more difficult or more unattractive for potential perpetrators - will prevent offences being committed. The Safety Programme focuses on specific elements of the strategy of situational prevention. An important assumption is that repeated breaking of the rules combined with a lack of visible supervision in the public domain provides a breeding ground for an enforcement deficit that is widely felt throughout the community. The intention is therefore to send out a signal by consistently enforcing the 'low-level norm'. Another key assumption is that extra supervision at 'hot spots' and 'hot times' produces the greatest returns. It is also assumed in the Safety Programme that, among other things by taking physical security measures, potential perpetrators can be discouraged from committing offences.

Systemic measures

In order to improve the functioning of the measures taken within the above three strategies, the Safety Programme also devotes attention to systemic measures. The most important of these, the chain approach, is mainly concerned with strengthening the relationships between different partners in the chain. In the area of law enforcement this means in the first place liaison between partners within the judicial chain: in 2006 the police were expected to deliver 40,000 extra suspects to the Public Prosecution Service, something which only makes sense if the Public Prosecution Service is able to respond adequately by adapting its working processes, while the courts must also not be overwhelmed by the number of cases being presented. The chain approach also embraces the connection between the judicial process through which the perpetrator passes and the subsequent social support and reha-

bilitation they receive from the probation and other services. In the developmental prevention strategy, the chain approach is concerned more with ensuring a seamless connection between the different care organisations, schools, local authorities and the police, so that problems can be detected at an early stage and at-risk young people are not lost from view or harmed due to poor communication or contradictory strategies. The core focus in the situational prevention strategy is public-private partnership.

Systemic measures are used to make substantive measures more effective by creating appropriate conditions and improving working processes. The success of these measures depends on how they are implemented. Process evaluations, which are needed in order to assess the quality of implementation, fall outside the scope of this study, however.

To what extent and in what way are the measures taken effective?

In order to substantiate safety policy it is necessary to know whether the measures deployed have had the envisaged impact on social safety. Evaluation research should provide an answer to this. Based on a systematic literature review, we therefore mapped out the empirical findings of Dutch effect evaluations and supplemented them with findings from other countries. The search criteria produced a list of 152 Dutch effect evaluations carried out in recent decades. A content analysis was then performed on each study, and at the same time a quality assessment was carried out.

Generally, it was found that the majority of the measures deployed by the government in recent decades have not been evaluated to determine their effects on social safety. A sizeable proportion (55%) of the measures implemented moreover failed to meet the minimal study design requirement (i.e. a quasi-experimental design) for an effect evaluation. As a result, it remains unclear in these cases whether any improvement in social safety is due to the measure in question or to something else. The main findings from the Dutch effect evaluations which have at least a quasi-experimental design are discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7. In those same chapters we also discuss the findings of recent systematic reviews and overview studies from other countries, mainly the United States, the United Kingdom and other Anglo-Saxon countries.

How plausible are the assumptions which underlie social safety policy?

By confronting the policy assumptions made in the Safety Programme (answer to the first research question) with the available knowledge on the effectiveness of specific measures in increasing social safety (answer to the second research question), we obtain an insight into the plausibility of the assumptions made and are therefore able to answer the third research question. We again do this separately for each strategy, concentrating on the assumptions which we can classify as plausible or implausible and on major omissions in the policy theories. For the other assumptions and more detail, we refer to chapters 8 and 9.

Law enforcement

In the first phase of law enforcement - investigation - the main policy assumption is that sure (or consistent) punishment, via different routes, will lead to an increase in social safety. Many measures are accordingly aimed at increasing the chance of being caught. Based on our study, we can conclude that increasing the chance of arrest has a positive impact mainly where the police concentrate their efforts on hot spots and at hot times and therefore take suspects 'out of circulation', at least temporarily. A high chance of being caught also appears to have a general deterrent effect. This general preventive effect does not apply where the police arrest a suspect after the event (reactive arrest), but only operates in the case of specific and anticipatory action. However, there is little plausibility in the assumption that an increased risk of being caught has a deterrent effect on suspects themselves. If anything, it actually lowers the threshold to committing new offences, especially among minors and perpetrators of relatively minor offences.

In the prosecution phase, the policy is to reduce the case throughput time, so that suspects can be convicted and punished more quickly. It is assumed that this increases the effectiveness of the sanctions imposed. Dutch research in this area shows that this assumption holds little water: more rapid imposition of punishments has not been demonstrated to have a positive effect in reducing recidivism.

A central notion in the sanctioning and aftercare phase is that a person-specific approach enables more 'customised' sanctions to be imposed, thus increasing the effectiveness of punishments. In the first place, a great deal is expected of custodial sentences. Imprisonment is found to be effective for the duration of the detention: suspects and convicted offenders are after all temporarily rendered harmless and have (virtually) no opportunity to commit offences. As assumed in the policy theory, however, it is not plausible to assume that incarceration will contribute to reducing recidivism after release. In fact there are even indications that custodial sentences may have a negative impact in this regard. The policy takes no account of this possibility at all, whereas the consequence for the longer term may be that people are being released who are at increased risk of recidivism. This means that detention combined with treatment, as well as other kinds of punishment, deserve attention as alternatives to custodial sentences. In line with the policy assumption, short custodial sentences in any event appear useless. If a prison sentence is chosen, it is better for it to be of sufficient length to enable the offender to pass through a resocialisation programme, provided such a programme is effective.

Although the Safety Programme looks at treatment programmes for prisoners, it largely ignores assumptions on an effective approach to these programmes. This is another gap in the policy theory. Research shows that cognitive behavioural therapy and social skills training are the most effective. The policy assumption that phased reintegration and aftercare based on supervision and support contributes to reducing repeat offending can be described as plausible.

Resocialisation programmes and support are also important for detainees with conditional sentences. The policy assumption that using these punishments as an

alternative to imprisonment increases the sanctioning capacity is plausible in the short term. In the longer term this assumption is only valid if these punishments are effective in reducing recidivism. This appears to be the case for conditional prison sentences. Where the punishments merely restrict freedom of movement and there is no resocialisation or support, the risk of recidivism is considerable. This means that conviction at a later moment will absorb sanction capacity at that time.

In the sanctioning and aftercare phase, recurrent offenders - often drug addicts - are an important target group. They are regarded as the main cause of both frequent crime and the deficiencies in law enforcement. Longer prison sentences (up to two years) are a particularly important measure for this group. From the perspective of protecting society, this measure is effective. For a select group - those who are assessed as the most open to influence - this time is used for behavioural interventions. There are indications that this reduces recidivism after completion of the programme by this group, but the rest can expect a more stringent regime, and if this means that prisoners spend most of their time in their cells this is likely to have a detrimental effect on recidivism.

The second target group identified in the sanctioning and aftercare phase in the Safety Programme are young people. For young people who commit less serious offences, the policy assumption that providing parenting support has a positive influence in reducing recidivism is empirically supported, especially if the support is supplemented by other forms of help. The idea of referring these young people to the Halt procedure is also supported. These and other 'alternative punishments' in any event appear to be much more effective than options such as the American 'scared straight' programmes, which can even serve to increase recidivism. Young people who display serious and frequent criminal behaviour are often placed under supervision and treatment or even placed in a re-education facility. As with adults, cognitive behavioural therapy and social skills training appear to offer the most promising results for young people. The policy assumption that re-education focusing on discipline (such as the Glen Mills School and the approach used in Den Eng) helps to reduce recidivism is therefore not very plausible. The criticism of the discipline-based re-education methods can as yet not be extrapolated to the zero-tolerance policy, because virtually nothing is known about the effectiveness.

Developmental prevention

We can be brief on the plausibility of the policy theory which places the emphasis on juvenile interventions. This theory does not describe any mechanisms which link means and ends, but merely links problems (delinquent behaviour) to causes (such as school dropout, parenting quality and alcohol use). We are therefore not able to assess the plausibility of this approach. Broadly, the factors cited in the policy theory are plausible as important risk factors for delinquent and aggressive behaviour, although the causal relationship that is assumed in the policy theory remains open to question. It would be desirable for future policy to set out the assumed relation-

ship between the measures and the risk factors; only then can an assessment be made as to whether the policy has a chance of succeeding.

Situational prevention

The strategy of situational prevention focuses primarily on measures which are clearly visible and which are intended to send out a normative signal. This strategy is exclusively concerned with general prevention; as soon as someone is actually caught, we are in the domain of law enforcement. The policy assumption that formal supervision (i.e. the police) leads to a reduction in crime and nuisance can be regarded as plausible, especially where it is concentrated on hot spots and hot times. There is also support for the idea that a visible police presence is effective in increasing subjective safety. Where formal supervision is carried out using camera surveillance, the observations on effectiveness are unclear. Camera surveillance is of most use in facilitating rapid police intervention and detection/investigation. The policy assumption that camera surveillance, as a form of formal supervision, prevents crime and nuisance, is doubtful. The assumption that camera surveillance can increase public perceptions of safety can be rejected more firmly.

Measures designed to improve the protection of potential targets of crime and thus make it more difficult for potential perpetrators to commit offences, also receive a good deal of attention in the Safety Programme. These measures are concerned mainly with technical security (an area where members of the public and businesses are encouraged to take their own responsibility). Predominantly positive research results mean that this policy assumption on protective measures can be regarded as plausible. Little is known about the effect of such measures on perceived (lack of) safety.

All in all, the measures to reduce opportunity which are emphasised in the Safety Programme and which the government regards as its own responsibility, rather than that of the private individual, are heavily focused on the perpetrator. The idea of the strategy of situational prevention is however more wide-ranging. It appears that when this policy is implemented at local level, the full range of measures is deployed and measures are (also) taken which target potential victims and situations. In the policy theory, however, a choice has been made in favour of measures which are closely related to those used in the law enforcement strategy. This is a pity, because measures such as functional supervision (e.g. by wardens and inspectors) appears promising. Although the research results are by no means uniform, the findings do point in a positive direction as regards reducing frequently occurring crime and enhancing perceived safety.

General conclusion

How much do we know about whether the Safety Programme has contributed to the recent fall in crime and the improvement in perceived safety? The diverse nature of the Safety Programme means it is not possible to express a definitive opinion on the Programme as a whole. Some parts of it offer promise in reducing crime and

nuisance (such as the deployment of the police at hot spots and hot times, attention for parenting support and the use of quality marks), while others do not (e.g. harsher detention regimes, arrests for minor offences and disciplinarian re-education facilities), while the effect of others is unknown (e.g. camera surveillance).

The tackling of frequent offenders which lies at the heart of the Safety Programme illustrates the mixed results achieved with the Programme. For example, the picture on reducing 'revolving-door crime' is a positive one; the police and justice system not only ensure that frequent offenders are removed from the streets, but also that they are not immediately back on the streets the next day to simply carry on their criminal activities. Here we see that the policy is achieving good results in the short term, with immediate protection for society. This may also have a positive impact in terms of social redress.

Our conclusion on the target group and the process through which arrested frequent offenders pass is a much more critical one. In the first place, there is a greater readiness to arrest suspects for minor infringements, an approach which can have the unintended effect of encouraging a criminal career. Second, longer custodial sentences are imposed in order to combat revolving-door crime, but without any clarity regarding further behavioural interventions or how the perpetrators spend their time during and after their period of detention. In the area of reducing recidivism, which is key to success in the longer term, there are thus no indications that 'sure, faster and more severe punishments' achieve greater success than would have been the case with a different policy.

The virtual culture buff¹

Public interest in cultural websites

Jos de Haan and Anna Adolfsen

This report describes the information available on public interest in cultural websites in the arts, cultural heritage, library and broadcasting sectors in the Netherlands. The study was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and was carried out jointly by the Faculty of History and Arts (FHKW) at Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR) and the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP. The report is based on a literature survey, interviews with experts, re-analysis of population surveys, discussion of opinion polls and other small-scale studies. Bringing together the material from different sources in this way has led to a first description of the current 'state of the art' of the public for digital culture, across the entire cultural field.

Increasing Internet use

Virtual cultural participation has become possible thanks to the rapid rise of the Internet in Dutch households. The digitalisation of these households progressed further with the arrival of the DVD player/recorder and digital television. These technologies have given media users more and more control over the selection of news, programmes and other content. In recent years, the Dutch have begun spending more time on the Internet at the expense of time spent watching television, listening to the radio and reading printed media. However, newspapers are also read on the Internet, while listening to the radio and watching television via the Internet have been growing strongly in popularity in recent years. This convergence of media has led to the same content being offered via different channels. The merging of radio, television, telephony and Internet services is also happening in the mobile media.

Cultural websites used mainly for information purposes

The Internet is used in the heritage and arts sector mainly as an information medium. The virtual user is primarily in search of practical information (e.g. opening times and accessibility). The search usually begins with a search instruction in Google or another search engine; heritage portals and websites are much less commonly consulted at the start of the search process. In 2003, books/magazines and radio/TV were more important sources of cultural information than the Internet.

Since then, people have increasingly begun using the Internet for this purpose, and information on theatres is now obtained just as often or even more frequently via the Internet than via the old media. It is still the case with cultural heritage, however, that everyone who obtains information via the Internet also uses another medium. The Internet is partially replacing other media, but is not reaching a new audience for heritage.

Partly thanks to the spread of broadband Internet connections and the growth in information on content as well as practical information on the Web, viewing audiovisual material online is becoming increasingly popular. Listening to music online has been popular for some time, as has watching film clips and playing games. These activities take up more time than searching for specific information. Heritage-lovers also look for the answer to more complex questions on the Internet first, before then involving other media as well in an extensive search strategy. Communication and the formation of communities are common with popular culture, but much less so with cultural heritage and the traditional arts. The adding of information by users (creation or user-generated content) in the form of audiovisual material also tends to be concentrated around popular music and self-made film clips. It is not just Internet users who share music via the Internet; musicians also offer (trailers of) their music on the Net, or present themselves there. MySpace is currently the most popular website where large numbers of users maintain weblogs and profiles.

Although e-commerce is now well established among private users, online ordering and paying for tickets and cultural products is proving slow to get off the ground. To a large extent, this is due to the limited availability of such services.

Composition of the group of virtual cultural visitors

The composition of the group of Internet users differs from that of the Dutch population with an interest in cultural heritage and traditional arts. This discrepancy is due mainly to the age of the Internet users. Today's young people have grown up with computers at home and are generally adept at using digital technology. People in their teens and 20s are able to find music and games easily via the Internet and consult information on the Web about theatres and cultural heritage more often than older people. People aged over 50 generally display a good deal of interest in cultural heritage and the higher arts, but (as yet) express that interest relatively little via the Internet. In line with the profile of their media use, older people generally prefer other information sources; television and newspapers are favourite, but for real devotees their own book collection serves as the starting point for increasing their knowledge.

Heritage and theatre websites are heavily used mainly by people with a high education level. There is no difference here between this virtual cultural public and the public who visit institutions; better-educated people are more interested in heritage, theatre and concerts than their low-educated counterparts both online and offline. Moreover, the online visitors to heritage and theatre websites contain a

relatively high proportion of people in work. Heritage sites attract slightly more men than women, while women are overrepresented on theatre websites.

Highly educated people also dominate in the profile of online newspaper readers. Compared with the paper version, online editions are also used relatively frequently by people in the 20-49 age group, and more often by men than women. Digital television viewers are also slightly more often male. They are also relatively often aged 35-55 years, have an above-average income and have one or two children living at home.

Reasons, opinions and wishes

The fact that more and more people are using the Internet for cultural purposes is connected in the first instance to the general characteristics of this medium. The Internet is valued for the convenience of unlimited access to information. However, general drawbacks of the Internet are also acknowledged for cultural websites. For example, heritage-lovers complain about the complexity of these sites and question the reliability of information provided on them. For theatre-lovers, too, the general pros and cons of the Internet dominate their evaluation of the medium. By contrast, lovers of the visual arts who are looking to purchase new works mention specific advantages of the Internet: they are able to search by colour, format, theme or artist. Respondents also stated that the Internet saves time because they can first do some research at home or run a search before visiting a gallery. The Internet is also felt to have a lower 'threshold' than a physical visit to a gallery. Key disadvantages are the two-dimensionality, the breaking of the tradition of physically selling and buying art and the reliability of online art dealers.

Online newspapers are regarded differently from the paper version. For the time being, the paper version wins because it is easier for the reader to take with them. Whether this will still be the case when digital reading devices become more widespread is a question that cannot be answered for the moment.

In so far as information is available on the wishes of the public, it transpires that they are mainly interested in highly practical issues. Members of *AVRO-klassiek*, a community for classical music, are for example interested in a digital programme guide, while theatre-lovers would like to be able to reserve their seats online.

In addition to the public at large, a group of professionals in various cultural sectors are interested in exploiting the possibilities of the Internet. Their wishes are somewhat more specific. Heritage professionals would like to see more online information on cultural heritage, such as an online platform with subject-specific information which visitors can both consult and post. Collection managers point to the importance of the reliability, applicability and topicality of online information.

Overlap of virtual and physical public

For the time being, there is little reason to suspect that museums and theatres will see a reduction in visitor numbers due to the digitalisation of objects, performances and concerts. Visitors to heritage websites visit museums, archives and historic

monuments more frequently than those who do not use these websites. It would seem that the interest in heritage manifests itself in several different ways. Visitors to museums, historic monuments and archives not only use the Internet more often to find information about heritage, but also make more use of other types of media than non-visitors to these websites. This does not however mean that the information on the Internet was also the reason that prompted their physical visit; research among a select group of classical music lovers showed that they rarely saw the Internet as the reason behind their physical visit to a concert. Nonetheless, almost a third of this group searched for information on classical music on the Internet. Not all people with an interest in heritage go to museums and historic monuments. There is a fairly large group of mainly older people who read about these things in newspapers, magazines and books but who do not (or not any longer?) pay physical visits. The Internet is also used to search for heritage information by people who do not visit heritage institutions. It is unclear whether these people did visit these institutions in the past but no longer do so, or whether they can be described as potential visitors. For the time being, the question of whether the Internet presents new opportunities or new threats thus remains unanswered.

The Netherlands in Europe

The Netherlands is one of the leaders in Europe in several respects when it comes to the spread of ICT. Almost 90% of Dutch people had a PC at home in 2006; 80% had an Internet connection and 66% broadband. The Netherlands takes the lead here. The Netherlands also scores highly when it comes to the proportion of the population who make online purchases, and has a prominent position in the digitalisation of culture. On the basis of this a relatively high level of interest in culture on the Internet might be expected. However, it is difficult to make any empirically substantiated statements about this, because comparable data are dated. In 2000 the Netherlands was in the European top five for both physical and virtual museum visits. Denmark and Sweden were at the top of the list in that year, with Southern European countries in particular lagging behind. In this respect, the pattern of visits to museum websites appears to follow the spread of the Internet, and it is plausible that the Netherlands is still among the top regions when it comes to museum website visits. This does not apply for all online cultural participation and the use of old media in digital form; in 2006, the Netherlands occupied a middle position in the reading of newspapers and listening to music online.

A look to the future

It is plausible to assume that the spread of (broadband) Internet among the Dutch population will continue and that non-ownership will largely disappear. Growing digital cultural content, greater familiarity with the median and increasing digital skills on the part of the Dutch will encourage virtual cultural participation. It is also plausible that the balance between the types of use will change. Where the Internet is currently used mainly as an information medium, in the future it will be used

more and more as a means of relaxation and personal development as well as for communication and the formation of online communities. A further increase in economic use of the Internet also appears likely; as well as ordering and paying for admission tickets, other cultural products will also be purchased more often online. Finally, the emergence of all manner of Web 2.0 applications will help ensure that users will no longer be merely consumers of digital content, but also producers. This will lead to a substantive deepening of the existing Internet use and mean that more and new people will begin making use of virtual cultural content.

Stumbling before the start¹

Leaving school without an initial qualification

Lex Herweijer

1 Reducing school dropout a key education policy priority

Reducing school dropout rates has been high on the education policy agenda in the Netherlands since the early 1990s. Too many young people are leaving school without an initial qualification, i.e. without completing an education at least to the level of senior general secondary (HAVO), pre-university (VWO) or senior secondary vocational (MBO) level 2. At the Lisbon Summit in 2000, the European Union gave added impetus to the Dutch policy on combating school dropout, setting a target of halving dropout rates within ten years. To achieve this, a number of measures were taken and existing initiatives supported. These included improving the match between pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO) and MBO, better pupil care and allowing more scope for education with a practical focus. Recently the school-leaving age for young people without an initial qualification was raised to 18 years (minimum qualification standard).

Content

This study investigated what progress has been made in achieving the objectives in relation to school dropout, and explored the bottlenecks in the various routes to achieving an initial qualification. The backgrounds of premature school-leavers were also studied and the achievements of the Dutch education system in relation to school dropout and initial qualifications is compared with the other members of the European Union.

Approach and data

The exploration of the bottlenecks on the route to an initial qualification was carried out using Education Number data that have only recently become available. Thanks to these data, it is now possible for the first time to determine accurately at which points on the road to an initial qualification pupils give up. Differences in dropout rates between schools can also be mapped out using the data.

In addition to these educational statistics, use was made of data from the 1999 Cohort Survey of Secondary School Pupils (VOCL) carried out by Statistics

Netherlands (CBS) and the Groningen Institute for Educational Research (GION). The international comparison was based on data from Eurostat and the OECD. The achievements in the area of preventing school dropout were set against other characteristics of the education systems in the EU member states in order to explore the background to differences between countries.

2 Trend in school dropout according to three indicators

The term 'school dropout' is used in relation to the initial qualification (*startkwalificatie*). Every young person in the Netherlands aged between 12 and 22 years who has not completed an education at least to the level of senior general secondary (HAVO), pre-university (VWO) or senior secondary vocational (MBO) level 2, and who has not been following a course of education for more than four weeks, is classed as a school dropout (premature school-leaver). Targets have been adopted for a range of indicators, each describing a particular facet of this phenomenon. One of these is a core element of national policy; the two others ensue from European agreements.

- At national level, a policy objective has been formulated in terms of the trend in the number of new school dropouts: the number of new premature school-leavers (aged 12-22 years) each year must have been halved to 35,000 by 2012;
- The European Union uses the criterion of the total number of premature school-leavers aged 18-24 years, expressed as a percentage of the population of the same age. The target is to halve this percentage in the Netherlands from just over 15% in 2000 to 8% in 2010;
- A second indicator used by the EU is the percentage of young adults with an initial qualification; the target for the Netherlands is to raise the percentage of 20-24 year-olds with an initial qualification from 72% in 2000 to 85% in 2010.

Clear objectives but a long-standing lack of information

There have long been problems with the quality of the data on school dropout; the records on new school dropouts held by Regional Reporting and Coordination Centres (RMCS) were incomplete, particularly in the first years after 2000. More recently, figures have become available based on the Education Number; these provide a more complete and reliable picture of school dropout, but are not readily comparable with earlier RMC figures. As a consequence, it is not easy to track the trend in the number of new school dropouts each year over the longer term. It is also unclear whether the target of a maximum of 35,000 dropouts really does represent a halving of the starting situation.

Progress on the EU indicators, but not enough to achieve the targets

According to the RMC records, the number of new school dropouts each year has fallen rather haltingly from over 70,000 in the initial year (2001/02) to 56,000 in 2005/06. The figure based on Education Numbers was roughly the same in 2005/06 as the RMC figure, but cannot readily be compared with it. In the short period

(2004 - 2006) for which figures are available based on the Education Number, the annual number of new school dropouts reduced from 60,500 to 53,100, but in the latter year the fall was only slight (a reduction of 1,000). In order to achieve the target of 35,000 school dropouts in 2012, the number of new dropouts would need to reduce by 4,300 each year.

The scores on the two EU indicators can be followed over a longer period. Since 2000 – the starting year for the Lisbon targets – the score on both indicators has improved. The percentage of school dropouts aged 18-24 years reduced from over 15% in 2000 to around 12% in 2007, while the percentage of 20-24 year-olds with an initial qualification rose from 72% in 2000 to 76% in 2007. Progress has thus been made since 2000, but the improvement is too slow to enable the targets for the EU indicators to be achieved as early as 2010, though the reduction of one percentage point in the number of school dropouts from 2006 to 2007 is encouraging.

3 *The Netherlands no better than average in Europe*

Although the figures on school dropout have improved in recent years, the achievements of the Dutch education system in this area are still modest from an international perspective. With almost 13% school dropouts aged 18-24 years, the Netherlands was among the average performers in Europe in 2006, scoring slightly better than Germany, France and the United Kingdom and fractionally worse than Belgium and Ireland. The countries with good scores, such as Finland and Austria, recorded percentages of less than 10%. On the second EU indicator – the percentage of 20-24 year-olds who have completed senior secondary education – the Dutch score of 75% in 2006 came slightly lower in the European rankings; in countries with good scores such as Sweden, Finland and Austria, the figure was already around 85% in 2000.

The percentage of school dropouts in the European Union reduced by an average of only 1.6 percentage points between 2000 and 2006, and the percentage of young adults who had completed the second cycle of secondary education improved by less than one percentage point to 76%. Progress in the various European countries is thus taking place much too slowly to achieve the Union-wide Lisbon targets, namely a halving of school dropout throughout the EU by 2010 and an increase in the percentage of young adults with an initial qualification to 85%.

No uniform differences between different systems

Countries in the European Union have made different choices in the structuring of their secondary education systems. Some of the member states operate a stratified system, where students are placed in different streams from the beginning. Apart from the Netherlands, this system also operates in Belgium, Germany, Austria and – outside the Union – Switzerland. In countries with an integrated secondary educa-

tion system, this streaming only takes place when students enter the second cycle, at around age 15 or 16.

The differences in achievement and the inequality between students from lower and higher social backgrounds are generally greater in countries with stratified secondary education systems. When it comes to school dropout, however, we find no clear correlation in our data: the percentage of premature school-leavers is not systematically higher or lower in countries with stratified secondary education systems than in those with integrated systems. The integrated systems in Scandinavia, with their strong emphasis on 'inclusion' of students, perform well, but this can also be said of some countries with stratified secondary education systems, such as Austria and Switzerland. On the other hand, the student's home setting generally has a bigger influence on the risk of school dropout in stratified systems.

Other factors: education level of parents and achievement level of 15 year-olds

Other factors which show some correlation with the rate of school dropout include the population profile and the skill level of young people when beginning the second cycle of secondary education. Countries where the educational expansion is already well advanced and where the vast majority of parents already have a secondary or higher education background, score better than countries where lots of parents still have a low education level. The latter factor explains the weak scores of a number of Southern European countries (Spain, Portugal). Good achievements by 15 year-olds, as measured in the PISA survey (Programme for International Student Assessment), are also important: the percentage of dropouts tends to be higher in countries where large numbers of students perform weakly. The physical equipping of schools also plays a role to some extent: high (government) spending per student in secondary education generally correlates with a lower school dropout rate.

Deviations from patterns

Specific patterns can thus be discerned, but at the same time there are countries which clearly deviate from those patterns. Some countries score well in the area of preventing school dropout despite relatively modest spending on education, or in spite of a relatively large number of poorly performing 15 year-olds. Within Europe, Finland has the optimum combination: good scores on the EU indicators for school dropout and initial qualifications, few weak students according to the PISA survey and a relatively modest level of spending. The relatively homogeneous population works to Finland's advantage here: the percentage of non-Western ethnic minority students is low compared with many other European countries. The percentage of underachieving 15 year-olds in the Netherlands is also relatively small. This means that there is a relatively good basis on which to build in the second cycle of secondary education, but despite this the Dutch education system performs only moderately in an international perspective in terms of school dropout.

4 Dropout points on the route to an initial qualification

There are two main routes to obtaining an initial qualification in the Netherlands: the VMBO/MBO (vocational) route, which is followed by more than half of all students, and the HAVO/VWO route, which is followed by just over 40%. There are several points at which students following the VMBO/MBO route tend to drop out: they may leave school without a diploma whilst still following VMBO courses; they may obtain a VMBO diploma but not go on to MBO; or they may drop out during the MBO programme.

MBO has highest dropout rate

The biggest group of dropouts are students in MBO; roughly two out of three premature school-leavers – more than 35,000 students in 2005/06 – gave up whilst following MBO programmes. The two other groups are considerably smaller: roughly 11,000 students drop out of general secondary education, and a smaller number (around 7,000) obtained a VMBO diploma but did not go on to a follow-on programme.

High dropout rate at the lowest VMBO level

In 2005/06 1.2 % of students left secondary school without a diploma. There are wide differences between the different secondary education levels: the risk of dropout at the lowest level of pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO) is roughly three times the average. The picture in the other VMBO programmes resembles the general picture in secondary education much more closely. The main dividing line is not between VMBO and HAVO/VWO, but between basic vocational programmes and the more senior levels of secondary education.

The annual percentage of school dropouts is fairly low, though it has to be borne in mind that a cohort of secondary school students is exposed to the risk of dropout for between four and six years. As a result, the dropout rate rises sharply after a number of years: by the start of the fourth year of secondary school, more than 7% of students who began their first year without a diploma have dropped out. Of those students who began at the lowest VMBO level, no fewer than 17% have already left school by this point.

Extra risk for VMBO students receiving learning support

Weak students who are considered unlikely to be able to attain a VMBO diploma unaided after leaving primary school, are eligible for learning support. Roughly 11% of third-year students throughout the whole secondary education system receive an indication for learning support; at the lowest VMBO level, however, this figure rises to more than 50%. An indication for learning support is found to be an additional risk factor for dropout in the early years of the VMBO programme in particular.

In addition to students with an indication for learning support, there are two further categories of 'special needs pupils': just under 3% of each school generation follow 'practical education' (praktijkonderwijs) programmes (intended for pupils not considered capable of attaining a vmbo diploma) and the same percentage are taught in special secondary schools. There is a lack of precise information on school dropout rates in these two groups, but it is clear that the vast majority do not obtain an initial qualification. 'Practical education' is aimed at students who are unable to achieve a diploma due to their limited capacities, while very few students in special secondary schools attain a diploma – estimates suggest no more than 5%; for the majority, this is the highest level of education they achieve.

The number of 'special needs pupils' (receiving learning support in pre-vocational education, following 'practical education' programmes or in special secondary schools) is growing; where 10% of pupils fell into one of these categories in the early 1990s, the figure had increased to 17% in 2006/07.

Low dropout rate in the transition from vmbo to mbo

Pupils with a vmbo diploma have to go on to a follow-on programme if they wish to obtain an initial qualification. Contrary to what was assumed until recently, not many students leave school after obtaining a vmbo diploma: 94% go straight on to senior secondary vocational (mbo) or senior general secondary (havo) programmes. The 'leakage' from the initial qualification route is thus not excessive in the transition from vmbo to follow-on programmes.

A striking aspect here is that the number of students making the transition from junior general secondary education (mavo) to havo, which virtually collapsed in the 1990s, has been increasing strongly again in recent years, and at 18% is almost back to the level of the early 1990s. To some extent this is due to ethnic minority students obtaining multiple qualifications as a means of advancement, but this practice has also increased among indigenous students.

High dropout rates at the lower mbo levels

The highest proportion of dropouts – 35,000 per year – is found in senior secondary vocational education (mbo). On average, over 9% of students up to and including age 22 drop out from mbo programmes, though there are wide differences between the different mbo levels. At level 1 (assistant training), the annual dropout rate rises to 35-40%, compared with just over 5% at levels 3 and 4. The basic vocational programmes (level 2) occupy a midway position, with an annual dropout rate of around 15%. Six out of ten students who leave mbo programmes early do so from the bottom two levels. At level 1 it is not possible to leave with an initial qualification, but students dropping out at this level have also usually not attained a diploma at the assistant training level.

Initial qualification success rate in MBO

The percentage of a cohort of students who ultimately leave MBO without an initial qualification is substantially higher than the annual dropout figures. Approximately 32% of students who begin full-time vocational training programmes, and 38% of students beginning block or day-release courses fail to complete them. Choosing the wrong course is frequently cited by both students and teachers as a key reason for dropping out of these courses. The underlying reason is the still often poorly developed career perspective of students in the final phase of VMBO.

Shift in risks: high dropout rate among MBO students without a VMBO diploma

Students who fail to obtain a VMBO diploma can still progress to the lower levels of MBO through the open admissions system. They are not only found out level 1, which specifically targets these groups, but are also frequently to be found at level 2: one out of four students at level 2 do not hold a secondary school diploma. The open admissions system in MBO helps keep down the dropout rate from secondary education in the short term. Thereafter, however, the risk of dropout is one and a half times greater among this group of students than among those who entered by virtue of their VMBO qualification.

Open admissions putting pressure on MBO standards

The scarce research that is available on the language skills of MBO students presents a worrying picture. A few years ago it was observed that the language skills of half these students were insufficient to enable them to participate in education or the labour market. Recent research has again shown that the reading skills of many MBO students are very poor, especially those in levels 1 and 2, but also – albeit to a lesser extent – at levels 3 and 4. These problems are likely to be a consequence of the open admissions system for students who were not able to obtain a VMBO qualification. The raising of the school leaving age (minimum qualification standard) is likely to lead to a further increase in the number of students moving from VMBO to MBO, including those without a VMBO qualification.

5 *Backgrounds of premature school-leavers*

High dropout by boys, students from single-parent families and low-income groups

Both in general secondary education and in MBO, boys drop out of school more often than girls: boys are roughly 25% more likely to leave school early than girls. The risk that pupils from single-parent families will drop out is also roughly twice as great as among children from families with two parents. Roughly 15% of secondary school students grow up in single-parent families, and this proportion is increasing.

There are also marked differences between students from low and high income groups, both in general secondary education and in MBO: the dropout rate among students from the lowest income groups is roughly twice that of students from

the higher income groups. Students from families whose parents are not in paid employment are also at greater risk.

High dropout rates among ethnic minorities

The dropout rate among non-Western ethnic minority secondary school students is roughly twice that of indigenous students. Students from the first generation are at much greater risk than the second generation, who were born and raised in the Netherlands. Antilleans and other non-Western minority students drop out more often than Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese students.

The dropout rate among non-Western ethnic minority MBO students is also nearly twice as high as among indigenous students. This is exacerbated by the large number of non-Western ethnic minority students who entered MBO through the open admissions system. This makes the already high dropout rate among non-Western ethnic minority students in MBO additionally worrying: roughly half of them also do not hold a VMBO diploma. The high dropout rate among students from minorities is partly due to the often low education level of their parents and their low achievement level when they began their secondary school career.

Major impact of low starting level at secondary school and the education level of the parents

Analyses in the VOCL 1999 school career survey make clear that a student's achievement level at the start of their secondary school career (score in National Institute for Educational Measurement (Cito) tests, recommendation from their primary school) has a major impact on the risk of school dropout: the dropout rate among students with a low starting level and/or a low recommendation from their primary school is between three and four times as great as among pupils with an average achievement level. In addition, students with low-educated parents are at increased risk of dropout. This is partly due to the low achievement level with which these students begin their secondary school careers, but the education level of the parents also has a direct influence.

Degree of urbanisation is a risk factor

The dropout rates in the four largest cities in the Netherlands (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, The Hague) are twice as high as in smaller municipalities. At district level, the dropout rate among students from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (with large numbers of poor families, families without income from employment and a high percentage of ethnic minorities) is twice as high as among students from other neighbourhoods. These regional differences can of course not be seen in isolation from the composition of the student population, for example in the four major cities or in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However, the residential setting also plays an independent role: the more urbanised the residential environment, the greater the risk of school dropout. There is also a small additional disadvantage to living in a

disadvantaged area: the 'net' risk of dropout in these neighbourhoods is a factor of 1.1 higher. An urbanised residential setting is thus a risk factor for school dropout, probably due to an accumulation of problems in this residential environment.

Marked differences between secondary schools

Dropout rates vary widely between different secondary schools. The average proportion of students leaving without a qualification is 1.6% across the total of more than 1,100 schools, but there are some schools where the figure is double this or more. One in eight schools see 3% or more of their students leaving without a diploma each year, and in one in 20 schools the figure rises even higher, to above 5%. To some extent this variation can be ascribed to differences in the standard of education provided by the school and the backgrounds of the individual students.

Large secondary schools are not a risk factor, but dropout rates are higher at 'ethnic' schools

The risk of dropout also seems to correlate with a number of characteristics at school level. It is often claimed that increasing the size of secondary schools has undermined the social cohesion within the school, possibly leading to a greater risk of dropout. This is found not to be the case, however: if anything, students at small schools appear to be at greater risk. These may be schools which attract few students because they are in difficulties, or because they have to operate under difficult circumstances which lead to high dropout rates. Large schools are probably able to accommodate the objections about mass education and anonymity by organising care and support at a lower level, close to the individual student.

A high concentration of non-Western ethnic minority students does correlate with a higher risk of dropout: 'ethnic' secondary schools appear to increase the risk of dropout.

Dropout and educational quality

The Dutch Education Inspectorate has conducted a detailed comparison of schools with high dropout rates and other schools, and has concluded that schools with high dropout rates do less well in meeting the standards in relation to quality assurance, teaching content, the didactic quality of teachers, the learning climate and the support provided to students with special requirements.

The views of premature school-leavers

Premature school-leavers themselves often point to the school climate as a reason for their early departure. Young people who have dropped out perceived a lack of interest on the part of the school for their well-being; they felt they received insufficient support and that they had been more or less abandoned. Premature school-leavers with a history of truancy are surprised at the lax attitude of the school to this. Personal problems can also play a role, but are put forward less often by premature

school-leavers themselves as a reason for leaving school before obtaining a qualification. Students dropping out of senior secondary vocational education (MBO) also mention choosing the wrong course as an important reason for dropping out. The pull of factors outside education, for example in the form of paid work, plays a less prominent role in their view.

The experiences of premature school-leavers show how important it is to have a school climate in which there is a central commitment to the students and in which the school actively seeks to combat truancy. School heads and teachers agree that students in risk groups benefit from structure, a framework of rules, strong action against truancy and the creation of a bond between the student and the school.

Differences between individual MBO schools

The percentage of premature school-leavers among MBO students also varies widely from one school to another. The average for all establishments is 8%, but there are also MBO schools where the dropout rate rises to 12-15%, while at the other end of the spectrum, the figure in one in eight schools is below 5%. These differences are related to the training level offered and the backgrounds of the students. Characteristics at school level, such as the size of the establishment or the concentration of non-Western ethnic minority students, do not explain differences in the dropout risk between individual schools. It is important to note here, however, that it was not possible to differentiate between the different sections of individual MBO establishments.

6 Pointers for policy

While some progress has been made in recent years in reducing school dropout, developments are slow. There is scope for policy in a number of areas aimed at reducing dropout rates. Some of these are also found in the government's 'Driving down dropout' (Aanval op de uitval) policy.

Aiming to reduce disadvantage and strengthen student support

The high dropout rate among students from risk groups can be attributed partly to their low level of achievement; they are already often at a disadvantage in primary school and begin their secondary school career poorly equipped. In addition, they more often face all kinds of problems outside the school – in their home or residential setting – which can stand in the way of a normal school career. In order to reduce the dropout of young people from these risk groups, a twofold policy therefore needs to be pursued. On the one hand it is important to seek to raise educational achievement and reduce educational disadvantage. A start needs to be made on this in the preschool and early school phase, but the achievements of the weakest pupils will continue to require attention throughout their primary school careers. Educational standards can be used to monitor the achievements of pupils in the core subjects,

and additional lessons can be given to help disadvantaged pupils. On the other hand, early identification and the rapid offering of appropriate help are important for pupils who are being held back by all kinds of problems outside the school. Based on experiences in the field, collaboration between support workers from various disciplines (youth health care, welfare, youth care, compulsory school attendance and safety) in multidisciplinary care and advisory teams is a sound approach here.

Encouraging parents to take responsibility

In schools with large numbers of at-risk pupils, the division of tasks between the school and families is under pressure. In order to prevent damage to children's school careers, schools are increasingly taking on more tasks which in the traditional role divisions would have been the responsibility of the family. This broadening of the school's tasks raises questions about the role of parents; should parents who fail their children in this regard not be reminded more emphatically of their responsibility in bringing up, supporting and controlling their children? Teachers in MBO schools, for example, feel that parents could do more to prevent dropout and should be held to account more frequently for the behaviour of their children.

It is however difficult to reach parents of at-risk pupils, and the problems within families will sometimes be such that appealing to parents has little chance of success. Schools which appeal to the responsibility of parents in a bid to limit the broadening of their own tasks then face a dilemma, since this makes it difficult to get the best out of at-risk pupils.

No more passing the buck

The possibility for open admissions, allowing students to progress from VMBO to MBO without obtaining the requisite qualifications, has given rise to a practice whereby problems and risks are transferred from the first to the second school type. However, MBO students who do not hold a VMBO diploma are at increased risk of dropout, so that they still end up empty-handed in terms of qualifications. The open admissions system needs to be applied more selectively at MBO level 2. Tackling disadvantage more effectively at an earlier stage (in primary school and/or the first years of VMBO) would enable more VMBO students to obtain a diploma. The limitation on the amount of time students are allowed to spend in secondary education should also be reconsidered; this forces students who fail to qualify in VMBO for a second year to transfer to MBO without a diploma.

Balanced spread of indigenous and non-Western ethnic minority students difficult to achieve

Spreading non-Western ethnic minority students more evenly through the secondary education system could in theory reduce the overall dropout rate. This is difficult to achieve in practice, however, for several reasons. Since different levels of secondary education are often provided in different buildings, a degree of segregation arises

automatically. Freedom of school choice increases this segregation further. In order to reduce this, different levels of secondary education would need to be offered in the same location to a greater extent than at present, and school choice would need to be guided. Many parents will see this as an infringement of their right to choose a school freely and will attempt to circumvent the restrictions. Segregation is a stubborn problem which is difficult to combat. It is therefore important that the quality of the education provided in schools with a high proportion of non-Western ethnic minority students is as high as possible.

Problems with the transition from VMBO to MBO: intensify career guidance

Course selection is a key problem area in the transition from VMBO to MBO. VMBO students with a poorly developed picture of the world of work will have difficulty choosing an appropriate training course, and this is an important reason why students leave MBO courses early. Better career guidance would be a means of reducing the problems in selecting courses for students transferring from VMBO to MBO.

Extended VMBO

Experiments with extended VMBO are an attempt to eliminate matching problems between VMBO and MBO by offering the entire educational programme from VMBO to MBO level 2 within a single institution. The anticipated benefits are that the didactic approach will remain the same and that it will be easier to ensure a continuous line in student guidance and care. One possible objection is that students will have to choose the course in which they would ultimately like to attain an initial qualification at an early age. The precise design of the experiments has still to crystallise fully.

Minimum qualification standard not suitable for all kinds of premature school-leavers

With effect from 2007/08, the school leaving age for young people without an initial qualification has been raised to 18 years. This measure appears to be aimed mainly at students without a problem background who for example have difficulty choosing an MBO course after completing VMBO and who are attracted to the labour market instead. These students will have to consider a follow-up programme and will not be able to submit to the temptation of a paid job. In reality, however, the number of students giving up after attaining their VMBO diploma is not very large: roughly 6,000 students who left the education system in 2006 with a VMBO diploma would be covered by the new scheme. The measure seems less appropriate for the other groups of premature school-leavers – young people who do not have the ability to attain an initial qualification, students with all kinds of problems or with a severe lack of motivation.

Learning from other countries: encouraging people to obtain an initial qualification later

The Dutch education system follows the Central European model of early selection and differentiation in secondary education. One strength of the Central European

systems is the close relationship between learning and working. Compared with countries such as Austria, however, this relationship is less well developed in the Dutch education system. Austria offers more facilities for combining education and working, and leaving school early does not mean the end of learning in connection with a job. Moreover, the attention devoted to raising qualifications does not end at 23 years in Austria. The training of young people who have left education prematurely is embedded in a broader approach of lifelong learning.

The Austrian example suggests that there are gains to be made in the Netherlands by bringing education and the world of work closer together. This not only means that greater scope needs to be created in the education system for practical elements, but also that students who leave school early are encouraged to transfer to a paid job and that they obtain an initial qualification later in combination with their work. The obstacles that play a role here need to be investigated, as well as how raising the qualification level of young adults without an initial qualification can be achieved.

Not cricket? ¹

A study of undesirable behaviour in amateur sport

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This study looks at undesirable behaviour in amateur sport. The aim is to obtain a clearer picture of:

- the incidence of undesirable behaviour in popular sport compared with other sectors of society;
- perceptions of sport and the extent to which views on sport and negative experiences have an impact on participation in sport;
- the extent to which existing interventions and campaigns to prevent or reduce undesirable behaviour are known and used.

The incidence of undesirable behaviour in amateur sport was compared among other things with the incidence in professional football, and experiences with verbal aggression as a spectator of professional sport were also studied. Beyond this, professional sport is left out of consideration here. The study was based on a data set compiled in the autumn of 2007, collected among the Dutch population aged 12 years and older and from administrators of sports clubs (not supporters' clubs).

Under the influence of trends such as individualisation, informalisation and intensification, norms and values in society have changed in recent decades. People have become less dependent on traditional carriers of authority (the Church, the family) and have acquired greater freedom to structure their lives as they see fit. The desire for intense experiences has also increased (Schnabel 2000). On the one hand these trends mean that people have more freedom to make choices, while on the other hand they also increase individual responsibility. Both can lead to disappointment for the individual, and this will sometimes manifest itself in undesirable behaviour.

Undesirable behaviour is a broad concept which encompasses theft, vandalism, threats, physical and verbal aggression, discrimination (sex, religion, culture, homosexuality) and nuisance (smoking, alcohol or noise). The seriousness of these forms of undesirable behaviour varies, as does their impact on witnesses and victims. The range of undesirable behaviour can be placed on a continuum running from

unpleasant to unlawful (WRR 2003). Precisely because of the competitive nature of sporting events, the threat of undesirable behaviour is ever present.

Sport enjoys a certain amount of autonomy within society in the sense that specific rules have been formulated within sport on what is considered acceptable behaviour. To some extent these rules dictate how a sport should be practised. In addition, many organisations also have house rules or codes of conduct which apply outside the immediate sport setting, for example in the canteen or changing room, in the stands or along the touchline. These rules are enforced through disciplinary structures and association law. There are however limits to the autonomy of sport; sport is at all times governed by the prevailing norms and values in society. The socialisation of sport and the wide media attention have turned the incidence, prevention and sanctioning of undesirable behaviour in sport into a topical and relevant issue. This study follows on from *A yellow card for sport. A quick scan of desirable and undesirable practices in and around the world of popular sport* (*Een gele kaart voor de sport; een quick scan naar wenselijke en onwenselijke praktijken in en rondom de breedtesport*) (Tiessen-Raaphorst and Breedveld 2007), in which attention is devoted to the incidence of different forms of undesirable behaviour in popular sport and the policy pursued in this regard. What has this new study produced by way of supplementary information?

First, this study looked at the incidence of undesirable behaviour in sport compared with the incidence in other situations. A distinction was drawn between the perceptions of undesirable behaviour on the one hand and people's actual experience of it as witnesses or victims on the other.

The perception of the incidence of undesirable behaviour in sport and society reflects the extent to which the Dutch population believe undesirable behaviour occurs. According to many Dutch citizens (aged 12 years and older), undesirable behaviour is common or very common on the streets and back (86%), around professional football (86%) and in nightlife areas (83%). Three-quarters (75%) think that undesirable behaviour occurs widely or very widely in amateur sport. This is comparable with opinions on the incidence of undesirable behaviour at school or on public transport. According to popular perception, undesirable behaviour occurs less commonly in shopping centres and at the workplace.

Almost 8 out of 10 Dutch citizens have themselves observed (witnesses) or experienced (victims) one or more forms of undesirable behaviour in the past 12 months. The most frequently reported forms of undesirable behaviour are verbal aggression, such as name-calling, bullying and teasing (47%) and destruction or vandalism (47%), followed at a short distance by noise nuisance (43%) and nuisance from smoking (43%). Being a witness or victim of sexual harassment (9%) and threats (7%) are the least frequently reported.

The Dutch most often experience undesirable behaviour in the street (73%) and in nightlife areas (51%), followed at some distance by other situations, with people experiencing undesirable behaviour less often in sport (26%) than in shopping

centres (32%) or at the workplace (30%), but more often than at school (23%) or on public transport (23%).

It is notable that the perceptions of undesirable behaviour in sport (and also at school and on public transport) are more negative than the incidence statistics suggest. People have the idea that undesirable behaviour occurs fairly commonly in different situations, whereas this is not supported by the figures on what people have actually seen or experienced. One in five Dutch citizens aged 12 years or older has experienced undesirable behaviour in sport either as a victim or as a witness. Of these, 11% were themselves victims, which is equivalent to 2% of the Dutch population as a whole.

Witnesses and victims most frequently report verbal aggression (12%) followed by physical aggression (6%). The incidence of threats (0%), sexual harassment (1%) and noise nuisance (1%) in and around sport is low.

Men and young people experience one or more forms of undesirable behaviour more often than women and older people. Members of ethnic minorities do not experience undesirable behaviour in sport more or less frequently than the indigenous population. Footballers (43%) and participants in other team sports (29%) experience one or more forms of undesirable behaviour in sport more often than participants in other sports (19%), and people playing sport through a club have experienced some form of undesirable behaviour more often (27%) than those participating in commercial sports centres (15%). Cumulatively, young male participants in team sports have experienced undesirable behaviour in sport more often than other people.

Secondly, this study looked at the extent to which negative views or experiences lead people to stop participating in sport or not to take it up. Undesirable behaviour is almost never a reason for giving up sport or working as a volunteer in sport (in both cases only 1% gave up because of aggression and discrimination). The most common motives for giving up are personal reasons (85% of participants, 59% of volunteers): lack of time, too busy, other interests or moving house. Spectators of amateur sport also generally give up visiting events for personal reasons. Excessive aggression is however cited more often as a reason for giving up going to matches by football spectators (8%) than by spectators of other amateur sports (3%). Spectators of professional football more often stop going because of the atmosphere (32%) or aggression (31%). These percentages are also higher than the percentages of spectators giving up going to other professional sports events (22% because of the atmosphere, 22% because of aggression).

Their experience with undesirable behaviour was the reason for 13% of victims and witnesses to give up participating in sport, working as volunteers or spectating. Usually they have negative experiences with vandalism, discrimination or theft. Since 20% of the population have been confronted with undesirable behaviour in sport, this leads to a dropout rate of over 2%. Victims and witnesses of undesirable

behaviour opted to report it to those in management positions more often than giving up sport.

3% of sports club administrators experience undesirable behaviour in their club (mainly large team sports clubs) as a major problem. Half the administrators have received complaints about undesirable behaviour in the past year. Most of these complaints relate to verbal aggression (27%), destruction or vandalism (22%) and theft (18%). Clubs respond in different ways to these complaints. In more than half the cases (54%), those responsible for the behaviour are spoken to. Warnings are also frequently issued (35%). When it comes to theft (38%) and destruction or vandalism (33%), incidents are regularly reported to the police. Complaints come more often from participants in sport than from parents, volunteers or others. One in five administrators report that complaints can always be settled to the satisfaction of the administrator concerned; two-thirds report that this is usually the case. Where complaints cannot be settled satisfactorily, the complainants generally accept this (82%). However, administrators also report that people are sometimes no longer willing to perform voluntary work (43% of administrators), something which can have important consequences for an amateur club.

Perceptions about sport play an important role in the choice of sport by an individual for themselves or their young children. If the sport is felt to be unsuitable, this is often because it is thought that there is too much aggression or violence involved in that sport (51% of the population cite this as a reason for their own choice of sport; 58% cite it as a reason for the choice of their children's sport), or because they have heard negative accounts about that sport (19% and 20%, respectively). This applies especially for football and combat and self-defence sports. However, there is also some ambivalence in this rejection of a branch of sport; a substantial proportion of respondents would deliberately choose a combat and self-defence sport for young people (especially judo) because it increases their strength and confidence. Football is also often seen as a suitable youth sport because it is a team game.

In the third place, this study looked at the familiarity with and use of materials to prevent or reduce undesirable behaviour. A variety of campaigns have been used for this purpose to combat physical aggression, discrimination, harassment or smoking. The study also investigated what activities sports clubs themselves undertake in this regard.

The familiarity with and use of campaigns designed to prevent undesirable behaviour is still limited among club administrators. Only a small proportion of clubs (11%) make use of the support tools and materials that have been made available. Those who do use them are generally positive in their view of the user-friendliness of these materials. In addition, a surprisingly high proportion of the population are familiar with the national campaigns. Precisely because of this, it may be expected that these campaigns have an effect in raising awareness; they can make undesirable

behaviour easier to discuss and address. Whether this actually happens in practice could however not be deduced from the study data.

Despite the low take-up of campaign material, administrators and regular visitors to sports clubs or facilities feel that a great deal is being done to prevent and reduce undesirable behaviour. House rules are a frequently used tool; the majority of sports clubs use these rules to indicate what is and is not permissible (this is the case according to 52% of administrators and 79% of visitors to sports clubs or facilities). Instructions on game and match rules (according to 69% and 62%, respectively) and attention devoted to sportsmanship and respect during training (73% and 54%, respectively) are widely used. Social control by fellow-club members is also important: in almost all cases, perpetrators are challenged about their inappropriate behaviour (according to 97% of administrators and 86% of visitors). These percentages do seem exceptionally high, and it is not impossible that club administrators are keen to convey a positive image of their club.

Efforts to improve the quality of support and guidance on this point are slightly less common. Attempts to do this include careful selection of trainers and support workers (according to 44% of administrators and 41% of visitors), (refresher) training for club officials (51% and 41%, respectively) and mutual agreements on (exemplary) behaviour by trainers (67% and 48%, respectively). The picture is less clear when it comes to the efforts of clubs to avoid nuisance (smoking, alcohol, vandalism); on some points (smoking ban, restriction of alcohol sales), administrators claim that more is being done than is recognised by visitors to sports clubs and facilities.

Although a lot is being done, not all resources are used everywhere. More use could be made for combating vandalism and theft of security facilities such as lockers and CCTV surveillance in the sports facility; at present this happens at 23% and 11%, respectively, of clubs. It has to be borne in mind here that many clubs hire accommodation and are therefore dependent on the existing security provisions. Imposing fines is also a sanction that is used to only a limited extent.

According to many stakeholders, there are opportunities for combating undesirable behaviour more effectively. This applies in particular for the verbal aggression which occurs regularly in sport. House rules could be applied across an even broader front; there is wide support for this. The smoking ban has now been introduced in sports club canteens, and wide support was found for this in our study. The same applies for restricting alcohol sales at times when children are playing sport. The public awareness of campaigns could offer clubs an opportunity to involve sports practitioners more in addressing undesirable behaviour, for example through wider application of complaints procedures in sports clubs.

Based on our study findings, we are able to make a number of recommendations here. In doing so we draw a distinction between perceptions, prevention and sanctions.

The perceptions in relation to undesirable behaviour in sport are more negative than the actuality according to the incidence figures. Yet those perceptions work through into things such as the decisions on which sport people will take up or what kind of club their children will join. To improve the perception of sport, it is of great importance that the Dutch public realise that undesirable practices occur less widely than they imagine. Although perceptions are not the main target of the “Refereeing Masterplan ‘Entering the field with a whistle’” (Masterplan Arbitrage – *Fluitend het veld op*) and the campaign by the foundation for the promotion of ethical advertising (SIRE) ‘Give children their sport back’ (*Geef kinderen hun spel terug*), both are in reality attempts to combat undesirable behaviour. National campaigns could place greater emphasis on the positive values of sport. The media also have a responsibility in creating an image of sport in general and of professional sport in particular. Not showing disturbances in the stands is a good example of how this can be done.

In the second place, a number of strategies can be used to for the prevention of undesirable behaviour and repeat offending (cf. WRR 2003):

- Providing information on things such as (house) rules and explaining what is desirable and undesirable.
- Participation by members and other stakeholders in formulating and enforcing rules within clubs and encouraging participation in other ways besides the general members’ meeting.
- Setting a good example by responsible administrators, trainers and parents. Rewarding sportsmanship is also an important measure which is currently used by relatively few clubs.
- Increasing visible control. Recognisable supervisory officials could be appointed, such as attendants, stewards or concierges. This is currently not very common, though a substantial number of clubs have an administrator who acts as the contact point for complaints about undesirable behaviour. Another form of visible control is to install cameras. This is not (yet) common in club sport, despite fairly frequent complaints about theft and vandalism.
- Ensuring that the sports accommodation provides a pleasant atmosphere by properly maintaining it. There is a task for sports facility managers here.

Sanctioning undesirable behaviour in sport is a third option. Different forms of undesirable behaviour require different solutions. A great deal can be achieved if those concerned challenge each other in the event of undesirable behaviour and correct it if necessary. This certainly applies for forms of undesirable behaviour which are considered unpleasant or improper. Those concerned can make a major contribution, either as individuals or as a group (team) to limiting this behaviour. For more serious forms of undesirable behaviour, such as inadmissible or unlawful behaviour, the imposition of sanctions by the organisations concerned is a logical step. In organised competition sport, in particular, explicit rules are available which set the limits of what is permissible. Many sports clubs also have formal sanctions based on those rules which they apply regularly in the event of undesirable behaviour. Finally,

an appeal to the mainstream law enforcement and judicial bodies is possible.

This study points mainly in the direction of heavier sanctions for verbal aggression. The warnings which are currently the norm are not sufficient, and corrective action by trainers is seen by respondents as an effective remedy. There is also very wide support for a general smoking ban in sports canteens. The total ban on smoking in sports canteens which came into effect on 1 July 2008 is thus supported. Restrictions on alcohol consumption at times when young people are participating in sport is also widely supported, so that stricter compliance could quickly produce results.

A countryside for all Dutch people¹

How the Dutch view and use the countryside

Anja Steenbekkers, Carola Simon, Lotte Vermeij and Willem-Jan Spreeuwers

From a social and cultural perspective, the Dutch countryside underwent radical changes in the last three decades of the 20th century. The enormous increase in car mobility expanded people's radius of action in their daily lives, and the upscaling of all kinds of facilities reinforced this effect. Most rural villages in the Netherlands lost their autonomy during this period, as many inhabitants found work and leisure in the towns and in other villages. In addition, villages saw an influx of new residents, who retained their ties with their old social networks and residential environment. Rural areas became increasingly important for dwelling. The quality of life in these 'residential villages' derives above all from the good environment they offer. The inhabitants are forced to go elsewhere for work, shops and often schools as well.

The countryside is also undergoing major spatial and functional changes, though not to the same degree or with the same emphasis in all regions and all villages. Growing urbanisation is having a major impact on the countryside, since newly built houses, business parks and major infrastructure projects leave their mark on the landscape. The countryside has become an increasingly multifunctional area, which is being developed just as much as a place for recreation and as a place to live. At the same time, collective aims lay claim to the countryside, such as nature development projects and energy facilities. It is these socio-cultural, spatial and functional changes which provide the context for this study.

The renewal of the countryside which began in the 1990s is strongly focused on vitalisation. When it launched its Agenda for a Living Countryside (*Agenda Vitaal Platteland*) in 2004, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality set out a clear vision: "The countryside of the future will not just reflect the activity of farmers and other rural dwellers, it will reflect the activities and needs of all Dutch people."

In this population survey we attempt to discover how the Dutch perceive and use the countryside. The 2,058 respondents in the survey constitute a representative sample of the Dutch population. The central research questions are:

- 1 What does the countryside mean for the Dutch as a place to live and relax?
- 2 How do the Dutch perceive and appreciate the countryside?

Living in the countryside

The 6.2 million people living in the Dutch countryside are predominantly very happy with their residential situation. However, the countryside is not only important as a place for rural dwellers to live; it is also important for urban dwellers, around 30% of whom say they have explored the possibility of moving to the countryside. Those who have done so are mainly people who live in moderately urbanised areas. A relatively high proportion (43%) of 'quasi-urban people' – people who have lived in the countryside sometime in their life – would like to return to the countryside in their old age. Many 'original' urban dwellers having or planning a young family (42% of 30-39 year-olds) are also inclined to move to the country. They often consider the town less suitable for growing children and wish to find a safe and small-scale world in which to raise their families. Finally, an average of 10% of the elderly people (65 years or older) say they would like to move to the countryside, but the figure among quasi-urban people is almost twice as high. This matches the picture found among 'returning migrants' – rural dwellers who have spent some time living in an urban area and return to the countryside in later life.

The satisfaction with the residential environment correlates strongly with the satisfaction with the dwelling. Not surprisingly, rural dwellers are more satisfied in this regard, because they predominantly live in detached owner-occupied homes, which are relatively large and are situated in a natural and green environment.

Living in the countryside appeals very much to the imagination. The number of Dutch people saying they would like to live in the countryside one day amount to more than 2 million households. This is of course a latent desire which in most cases will not be realised owing to constraints and competing desires. Ultimately, around 30% of urban dwellers will actually take the step of moving to the countryside. The appeal for urban people is not only the attractive residential setting, but also the perceived close-knit and safe communities. The satisfaction with the countryside as a place to live, as expressed by newcomers, can be explained to a large extent by their satisfaction with their dwelling in combination with a positive view of the rural community.

The countryside for recreation

The countryside is important as a recreational area for virtually all Dutch people. For those living in the countryside, this is not very surprising, since it forms their day-to-day environment. Yet 93% of those living in towns also say they sometimes visit the countryside for recreational purposes. At least 70% of the population walk, cycle and enjoy nature in the countryside. Rural dwellers do this in larger numbers and more frequently than town-dwellers. The more 'sportive' activities such as running, in-line skating and road cycling are carried out by a relatively small group of people (just under a third), though in most cases they do so relatively often (over half do so monthly).

On average, people engage in two activities in the countryside; there is no difference in this between town-dwellers and rural dwellers. There is a difference in terms of frequency, however, because eight out of the ten recreation types are undertaken on a monthly basis significantly more often by rural dwellers. The agricultural landscape provides a backdrop for a restrained form of recreation, in which people traditionally enjoy the natural surroundings whilst cycling or walking. Since this kind of activity is especially popular among older people, the ageing of the population would appear to signal a growing demand here. Horseriding also fits in very well with a rural environment, and the current growth of this sector is likely to continue. Those undertaking more active recreational pursuits are often younger people, and they are more attracted by water sports.

Woodland and heathland are the ultimate recreational landscape for 85% of the population. Coastal landscapes also appeal to two-thirds of the Dutch population; they owe their popularity not only to the 'wild' nature they offer, but undoubtedly also to the opportunities for beach recreation. Many Dutch people consider the agricultural landscape considerably less attractive.

At present, recreation in the countryside is not of major economic significance; on average, recreation and tourism account for no more than 3% of rural employment, slightly higher in some areas. Day trips do not generate much revenue: a walker or cyclist will spend an average of six or seven euros during a day trip. Around 80% of the population are interested in agrotourism, especially for buying homemade products and seeing how modern agricultural businesses operate. There is also a substantial market for camping on farms or staying at farmhouse B&Bs, as these attract more than 40% of the population.

Perception and appreciation of the countryside

Individuals experience the countryside in their own way, but we have found that positive feelings dominate. More than three-quarters of the Dutch are (very) positive about the countryside, with the figure among rural dwellers being substantially higher than among urban people (87% and 72%, respectively). Only 2%, mainly young people, express negative or very negative views about the countryside. The positive feelings about the countryside are based on numerous factors: people enjoy the beauty of the countryside, the peace and quiet, safety and orderliness, and also appreciate the agreeable social climate and good housing quality. People who live in the countryside particularly appreciate its vitality, the social climate and the good housing. Urban dwellers do express the prejudice that people in the countryside are somewhat old-fashioned; they are also slightly more negative in their views about the accessibility of the countryside.

The perceptions that the Dutch have of the countryside were divided into three dimensions. The landscape dimension is the most important for more than half of all Dutch people. Qualities such as peace and quiet, space and a green environment are related largely to the landscape. With an average score of 7.4 out of 10, the landscape

is clearly positively appreciated. Young people value the landscape less than elderly people. Town-dwellers tend to attach great importance to the landscape qualities of the countryside, especially from a recreational perspective. For rural dwellers the vitality of the countryside is also important. Their opinions are accordingly less negative about the sacrifice of the traditional agricultural landscape for other (economic) functions.

The functional dimension shows that the countryside is still seen mostly as an agricultural (production) area. This is not surprising, given the predominant use of land for farming in the Netherlands. At the same time, however, the size of the agricultural sector has been in decline for several decades and new functions (housing, recreation) are becoming more important in maintaining the socioeconomic vitality of the countryside. However, the Dutch regard these newer functions as less important for the countryside. Although they approve of the diversification of agriculture, they are more moderate in their appreciation of other functions which impinge on the landscape (such as the equestrian sector).

The socio-cultural dimension is considered important mainly by rural dwellers. This is expected, because the countryside is where they spend their daily lives. The associations with life in the countryside are formulated positively, in terms of peace and quiet, freedom, safety, agreeable atmosphere and close-knit communities. There are also some negative perceptions, albeit to a lesser extent, concerned with social control, poverty and an old-fashioned image. All Dutch people, and especially rural dwellers, express very negative views about the crumbling of social life and a dwindling level of amenities in the countryside.

Generally speaking, the Dutch have a very positive, somewhat conservative and idyllic image of the countryside. Developments which could disrupt this positive image, such as urbanisation, the presence of intrusive structures in the landscape and changes to social life, are seen above all in negative terms.

All in all, our conclusion is that the idyllic image of the countryside still holds sway in the perception of the Dutch, even though modernisation and changes have undoubtedly less idyllic aspects. This supports the findings of other studies (e.g. Heins 2002). Although people understand the need for change, changes which adversely affect the landscape are usually seen as undesirable, unless they are also 'green'. The preference of the Dutch population could thus be summarised in the phrase 'a new countryside in an old guise'.

A countryside for all the Dutch people?

The countryside is important as a place to live, not only for 6.2 million people currently living there, but also for 30% of the urban population who have indicated to migrate to the country at some point in the future. The countryside goes a long way to meeting the residential needs of a majority of rural dwellers: 95% of them are (very) satisfied with their home and 92% with their residential setting. Yet approximately 10% of rural dwellers are dissatisfied with their residential setting. Both

potential newcomers and present rural dwellers feel that a number of qualities need to be actively safeguarded, namely the residential quality, social quality and landscape quality of the countryside.

The countryside is also important as a place for recreation; more than 90% of the Dutch population sometimes use the countryside for this purpose. Naturally, rural dwellers are more likely to spend their free time in the local countryside. Evidently, the countryside meets a certain need for recreation for large parts of the Dutch population, especially nature-related recreation. A number of specific characteristics are associated with this: people in search of recreation in the countryside are looking for peace and quiet, space, green and farms.

It may thus be concluded that the countryside is the domain of a large part of the Dutch population, though not (yet) all Dutch people, because around 10% of the population reported that they rarely or never visit the countryside for recreational activities. Moreover, the involvement with the countryside is selective; young people generally have a fairly negative image of the countryside and participate to only a limited extent in recreational activities in the countryside.

The future of the countryside

The Dutch people are fairly critical about all manner of developments. They are particularly pessimistic about the building of new homes and business parks, feeling that these by definition destroy the Dutch landscape. At the same time people, and especially rural dwellers, realise that new economic impulses are needed in order to retain the vitality of the countryside. Rural dwellers often also have an interest in such developments with a view to meeting their own needs for housing and employment. The Dutch are thus critical about the disappearance of agricultural land, but have few objections to the restoration of nature on former farmland or the reinstatement of the natural course of rivers. They thus appear generally not to be too concerned if the appearance of the countryside changes, as long as it remains open and green.

Of crucial importance is that the countryside, despite all the changes, retains its identity and continues to provide a contrast, especially in a spatial and morphological sense, to the urban area. This means that qualities such as peace and quiet, space and green must be nurtured. The agrarian cultural landscape remains an important element, because it largely shapes the identity of the countryside. Just as important, however, is that the rural community remains close-knit. Here again, a shared identity is important, because this creates a bond between people and motivates them to undertake new initiatives.

The same applies for the landscape quality, because this is translated into good residential quality and satisfaction on the part of rural dwellers. The traditional regional differentiation also contributes to the identity of the countryside and is

crucial in meeting the divergent needs and wishes of residents, people seeking recreation and the Dutch population in general.

If one thing has become clear, it is that the Dutch population have different images of and needs in relation to the countryside, as well as widely differing preferences in recreation and housing. The more diverse the countryside is in terms of landscapes, nature, residential environments and recreational activities, the better it will function as a countryside for all Dutch people.

Portraits of informal carers¹

Sjoerd Kooiker and Alice de Boer

More than a million people in the Netherlands provide informal care, i.e. care which is provided informally on a daily basis to people who are dependent on care. This makes informal care the most frequently given of any type of care. The Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP has already gathered a great deal of data about informal care, which it publishes at regular intervals. However, this report is not about the figures, but about the informal carers themselves. They talk about who they care for, about why they do it and about their experiences with the official bodies with which they come into contact. They also offer tips for other informal carers. These experiences were noted down during four group discussions, in which both male and female informal carers participated - almost 40 in total. During these discussions it was striking that although informal carers often have very different backgrounds, they often have a comparable style of working. We identified six working styles in all, and describe these below.

The born informal carer (informal carer with a 'care gene')

Some informal carers seem to have caregiving in their blood. They regard it as natural and logical to care for their loved ones. Most of these natural informal carers are women. Many of them have (had) a job in the care sector and therefore know how to seek out the relevant public bodies. It could almost be said that they have a gene which makes caring for others a natural act for them. Their caregiving is often not restricted to one person; they may for example successively care for their mother-in-law, father-in-law, own parents, best friend and finally their partner. Sometimes they even provide care to several people at once. The biggest danger for these informal carers is that they will take on too much. If a care relationship comes to an end, for example due to a nursing home admission, these born informal carers (briefly) feel wonderfully free again.....until the next needy person comes along. Benjamin, Petra, Sonja and Tineke are such born informal carers, and they tell their story in chapter 3.

The dynamic informal carer

The dynamic informal carer is first and foremost a doer. In the group discussions, four men and three women were found to belong to this type. In addition to their jobs, these people have often also thrown themselves into voluntary work or politics. And equally often, informal caregiving in turn turns them to new initiatives, this

time on behalf of other informal carers. Dynamic carers are managers, who are well able to deal with the personal budget system. They are able to decide for themselves who comes into the home and like to keep control of everything. They know where the boundaries lie and will not readily concede that they have too little space for themselves. As doers, they tend not to be worriers by nature. They are not frequently troubled by feelings of guilt. They also relatively often have positive experiences with public bodies. These are the informal carers that policymakers dream of. Cor, Els and Gina tell their story in chapter 4.

The angry informal carer

Informal caregiving not only means providing care to a loved one, but also involves a great deal of organising and therefore a great deal of contact with public bodies. Some informal carers find these contacts difficult, feel they are not taken seriously and are very indignant about this. These are the 'angry informal carers'. Men are often more vehement in their anger than women, and this sometimes works against them; they break off contact with the public authorities and are then left to cope on their own. Wim, Joop and Francien are informal carers for whom the anger dominates; they explain why in chapter 6.

The indispensable informal carer

Some informal carers have a very strong feeling that they have to carry the entire burden of informal caregiving and are therefore indispensable: if they do not provide the informal care, no one else will. They are the 'indispensable informal carers'. The fact that the burden of informal caregiving has come to rest on their shoulders has often been a gradual process rather than the result of their own conscious choice. Of the respondents in the group discussions, four men and four women can be characterised as this type of informal carer. Indispensable informal carers put their own interests last and often fail to realise their own plans. Some of them have negative experiences with organisations such as the Care Needs Assessment Centre (CIZ). They do not however go as far as the angry informal carers who break off contact with such organisations. Wouter, Menno and Martine are indispensable informal carers who recount their experiences in chapter 5.

The overstressed informal carer

Many informal carers suffer from stress and have difficulty coping. During the group discussions, two men who had looked after their partners at home were found to be completely exhausted and no longer able to cope. One of them was Henk; in chapter 7 he explains how this happened.

The resigned informal carer

Informal caregiving is a process that goes through a number of phases. The phase of stridently fighting for your case and your rights can sometimes be followed by a phase of resignation. An equilibrium has then been reached; perhaps not ideal and

still involving a great deal of organisation and bureaucracy, but a situation with which the carer can live. They are tired, but things are manageable now. We call these informal carers the 'resigned informal carer' here. Ben and Margot fall into this category; they describe their lives in chapter 8.

For two of the categories discussed here, the 'born informal carer' and the 'dynamic informal carer', the positive aspects of informal caregiving appear to outweigh the difficulties. For the other four types, it seems as if the problematic aspects have gained the upper hand. It would be presumptuous to conclude from this that informal caregiving is above all a struggle. In the first place, we cannot say anything about the size of the different groups; further research will be needed for this. Secondly, the informal carers who tell their stories in this booklet are all affiliated to Mezzo, the support organisation for informal carers. It is plausible that it is mainly informal carers with a fairly heavy care burden who have taken the step of joining this organisation. The informal carers who tell their stories here should therefore not be seen as a representative reflection of all informal carers in the Netherlands. On the other hand, their stories do provide an insight into the diversity that exists within informal caregiving.

The difference between male and female informal carers

Most informal carers are women, and women often shape our image of informal care. Women fairly readily assume the role of informal carer, often care (successively) for several people and not infrequently share the caregiving with others. If men are active as informal carers, they usually do so only when their wife or partner needs to be cared for. This was borne out in the group discussions: the male informal carers were mainly caring for their wives. It also emerged from the group discussions that men have a slightly different style of informal caregiving from women. They tend to see informal caregiving as work and look in the first place for practical support. If the official bodies do not cooperate, they readily become angry. Looking after their wives brings men closer to their partner, and this is the enrichment they experience. It often seems as if men have less need for contact with other carers, but when they take part in a group discussion it becomes apparent after a time that they do sometimes have a great need for emotional support and affirmation. Women find it especially difficult to organise things, to protect their boundaries and to take far-reaching decisions for others. They can find having to do so exhausting. The women in the group discussions had more difficulties with the finances than the men.

This booklet concludes with a number of suggestions for providing support to informal carers, for example by local authorities. The main suggestion is to be proactive and to take account of the diversity within informal caregiving. Dynamic informal carers and born informal carers may be fairly easy to reach, but this is not the case for angry, indispensable, resigned and overstressed informal carers. Local authority staff dealing with members of the public therefore need to be trained to recognise the 'question behind the question'.

A picture of part-time working¹

Why women work part-time

Wil Portegijs, Mariëlle Cloin, Saskia Keuzenkamp, Ans Merens and Eefje Steenvoorden

The study

This study seeks to provide an answer to the following questions:

- 1 How has part-time working developed in the Netherlands, and what role did the government and the two sides of industry play in this? How does this development compare with that in other countries?
- 2 To what extent do the hours worked by women correlate with their views on paid work, economic independence and the division of tasks between women and men?
- 3 What reasons do women working part-time give themselves for their doing so?
- 4 What opportunities are therefore increasing the working hours of women? What experiences have labour organisations had in their commitment to raising the employment rate/duration of women?

In answering these questions, we first performed a literature study and consulted existing data sources (e.g. the Labour Force Survey (EBB) published by Statistics Netherlands (CBS) and the Labour Force Statistics published by the Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD) and CBS). In addition, statements on the importance of work, income and leisure time were added for the purposes of this survey to the Time Use Survey (TBO) (860 women/698 men). A supplementary survey was also held among 1,034 women aged 18-64 years, more than half of whom were working part-time. To gain a better insight into the reasons why women without young children work part-time, 36 of these respondents were interviewed. Finally, seven companies were selected which attempt to make it more attractive for women to work, for example through 'mother contracts' or 'self-rostering'. Various stakeholders from each company were interviewed about the findings.

The trend in part-time jobs and the role of policy

The part-time job was born in the 1950s. In response to shortages of young female staff, a number of companies began offering part-time jobs to married women. They grasped this opportunity with both hands, and the labour participation rate of married women has grown enormously since that time. From the second half of the

1 SCP-publication 2008/24

1980s, more and more women without young children also began working part-time; during the last ten years there has also been a slight rise in the number of men working part-time, though it is still primarily the preserve of women.

The number of hours worked by women has increased markedly in recent decades, and more so in the Netherlands than in other European countries. This spectacular increase in the Netherlands is due entirely to the growth in the number of women with a part-time job; there has been no change in the proportion of women with full-time jobs over the same period: in 2006, 20% of women aged 50-64 years were in full-time jobs, the same as in 1985. The proportion of women working part-time has risen much less in other countries.

For a long time, the government refrained from intervening in the world of part-time work. It was only in the 1980s, by which time half of all women in work were working part-time, that the government actively began encouraging part-time work. The aim was to raise the labour market participation rate of women. From the 1990s, measures were taken to give part-time workers the same legal status as full-time workers. Part-time employment thus did not arise in the Netherlands as the result of a deliberate policy by the government or the two sides of industry, although this policy may have strengthened its growth.

A comparison of government policy on part-time employment in a number of European countries shows that in Spain, the United Kingdom, Germany and France, the policy was used mainly to make part-time jobs more attractive for employers. The Netherlands and Sweden are the only countries which pursued a policy aimed at making part-time work more attractive for employees. In the Netherlands, this may have contributed to a further increase in the proportion of women (and men) working part-time. In Sweden, by contrast, that proportion has fallen since the 1980s; this can probably be ascribed to the generous childcare and leave arrangements that were brought in in Sweden, so that the desire and need to work part-time is less for parents in Sweden than in the Netherlands.

Despite the relatively high proportion of part-time employment and the policy of strengthening the position of part-time workers, their position is not significantly better in the Netherlands than in the other countries studied here. Although the terms of employment for Dutch part-time workers are generally better than in the five comparison countries, the negative consequences for their careers are just as great as elsewhere. The fact that so many more women work part-time in the Netherlands is thus not because part-time working has less of a negative career impact than elsewhere.

In recent years, the government and the two sides of industry have come to see part-time work as a problem. The low number of hours worked by women is frustrating

the government's commitment to increasing the proportion of women who are economically independent. Moreover, there is a perception that women will have to work longer hours in the future in order to counter the effects of dejuvenation and population ageing.

The correlation between working hours and preferences

A strong orientation towards paid work, financial independence and an equal division of tasks between men and women is characteristic of women who work long hours outside the home. The value that women attach to paid work, and more especially the intrinsic aspects of that work, show a particularly strong correlation with the number of hours worked.

Reasons for working part-time

41% of women in part-time employment are mothers of young children (aged 0-11 years). Almost all of them work part-time because of the children; usually because they want to look after their children, and sometimes because it is the only way of arranging childcare. Another factor that frequently plays a role is that they want to devote more time and energy to their household and to themselves, their hobbies and their social contacts.

38% of young working women (< 40 years) without young children also work part-time; they account for 12% of the total group of women in part-time employment. The need for more leisure time is the main reason for not working full-time, but the household also plays a (major) role for two out of three young women. Almost half of them also do not work five days a week because in addition to their job they need time for training or study (this is always part-time study, because full-time female students were not included in this survey). 16% of young women work part-time involuntarily: they would like to work full-time, but are unable to find full-time employment.

The other part-time workers (47% of the total group) are women aged over 40 who no longer have young children. Their children are at secondary school, in further education or have left home, and some of these women have never had children. They work part-time almost as often as mothers with young children, and their average working hours are also comparable. The reason why they (still) work part-time is that they like having the extra free time, which they can devote to themselves, hobbies and social contacts. Looking after the household and their grown up children also plays an important role. As with young women, the burden of combining employment with work in the home is one of the reasons for preferring part-time work, and for many women with children at secondary school, looking after the children is still one of the reasons for not considering increasing their working hours. For one in three older part-time workers, their health does not allow them to work full-time, and one in six work part-time partly because they are having to look after parents or loved ones.

Most women working part-time thus say that doing so was their own decision. From the interviews with female part-time workers without young children, it emerged that this choice was made very easy for them, or was even encouraged by those around them. With one exception, their partners work five days a week, and the woman carries out the lion's share of the household work and care tasks. This task division appears to have arisen very naturally, just as naturally as the unequal contribution of incomes. Most women – like their partners – have no difficulty whatsoever with the fact that they earn less. The hours worked by the woman rarely appear to be a topic of conversation, and where this is the case, their partners seem to be more inclined to persuade them to take things easier rather than stepping up their working hours. Friends and family also consider it very normal for the woman to work part-time, even if she has no small children.

Half the women interviewed believe that they would not be able to work any more hours with their present employer, even if they wished to do so. The possibility of increasing their working hours is generally not an issue that is raised in performance reviews, and part-time working is completely normal in the organisations where the women work. No one has had to go to great is of trouble to get a part-time job, and some of them are in jobs where a 38-hour working week is actually no longer possible. Moreover, a proportion of the women, especially those re-entering the job market, are performing unappealing jobs. The attempts they have sometimes made to rebuild a career through training were not supported by their employers, partly because of their age and the fact that they worked part-time.

Scope for increasing working hours

Most women in part-time jobs do not want to work full-time, but many of them would like to work a few more hours than they do at present. This is particularly true for women with (very) small part-time jobs: two out of three with a job for between one and 11 hours per week, and almost half the women with a part-time job for between 12 and 19 hours per week would like to work more hours. By contrast, one in four women with a more substantial part-time job, and more than half the women in full-time employment, would like to work fewer hours. On balance, a part-time job for between 20 and 27 hours a week would be women's preferred choice.

Provided certain conditions are met, women's willingness to extend their working hours increases. These conditions relate mainly to the time and place where they have to work (work/life balance), the content of the work (more interesting work or better prospects) and the possibility of financial improvement. If these conditions are met, the majority of women say they would be willing to work more hours. The average working week for all women (including non-workers and those in full-time employment) could then increase by five hours.

A different way of organising work?

A different way of organising work, so that it fits the wishes of the employees better, was found to be an important condition for women, including those without young children, for increasing their working hours. A great deal is said about such a different organisation of work (mother contracts, e-working, self-rostering, age-conscious personnel policy), but in practice it proved difficult to find successful examples. The few companies which have embraced these new concepts are mostly still in the experimental phase and were thus unable to say anything about the consequences for the hours worked by women. More experience has been gained with 'mother contracts', but the level of interest in this has proved lower than expected; many women do not find the contract (maximum of 18 hours per week spread over four days) attractive enough, either in terms of content or remuneration. This matches the conclusions from our study: women like to work part-time, but in a substantial part-time job.

This study makes clear that the working hours of women correlate with a large number of factors. The remains of the traditional division of tasks between men and women is still evident and is reinforced by part-time working. Moreover, each woman in part-time employment cites very different reasons for working part-time. All this means that it is not simple to raise the working hours of women. The study has however also made clear where the opportunities for policy lie. First, it seems important to avoid women significantly reducing their working hours, for example when they have children. The example from Sweden shows that this can be achieved through first-class childcare and leave arrangements. Secondly, both women with and without young children would be willing to work more hours if they were able to fit their jobs more easily around their personal lives, for example through flexible working hours. There is a task here for employers. Thirdly, it is important that women working part-time are given scope and incentive to increase their working hours. The government has already taken numerous measures to make this financially more attractive for women. Employers could make the possibility of increasing working hours a standard part of performance reviews and, when looking for new staff, could give existing part-time employees priority over external candidates. Finally, it is important to break through the traditionally natural division of tasks between men and women. Women, men and employers need to take the work and income of women more seriously. The Part-time-plus Taskforce will be focusing on this cultural change in the coming years.

Life in our villages¹

Social capital in rural areas

Lotte Vermeij (SCP) and Gerald Mollenhorst (UU)

The traditional view of villages is one of close-knit communities. Policymakers accordingly like to assign a major role to the social community in seeking to guarantee and improve the quality of life in the countryside: it is 'above all up to residents themselves to make their environment a good and viable place to live' (LNV 2004). Today's village communities, however, bear no resemblance whatsoever to the traditional image of how things once were. People who spend their entire lives from cradle to grave living in the same village today represent but a small minority of rural dwellers. In fact, almost half the people who live in the countryside at one time lived in an urban area (Steenbekkers et al. 2008). Virtually all rural dwellers have access to a car and frequently leave the village for work, shopping and entertainment. The central question addressed in this study is what has remained of the close-knit village life for which the countryside is renowned, and to what extent local social cohesion contributes to the liveability and social vitality of rural areas.

This report is the fourth to be published as part of the research programme The Social State of the Countryside. The purpose of this research programme, which was commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV), is to develop a monitor which can track future social developments in the countryside. The present report follows on in particular from the second report published as part of this programme: *The Best of Both Worlds* (*Het beste van twee werelden*) (Simon et al. 2007), in which rural dwellers talked about their lives in the countryside and about how they perceive the local community. The picture they painted was a particularly rosy one. They were happy that the social control had relaxed somewhat, but were full of praise for the sense of belonging and willingness to help others: people in the countryside still look out for each other. In contrast to that study, which took the perspective of rural dwellers themselves as its starting point, the present study draws on quantitative data which were gathered in the 2007 survey *The Dutch on the Countryside* (*Nederlanders over het Platteland 2007 – NOP'07*). More than 2,000 respondents, living both in the countryside and in the cities, were interviewed at home on a wide range of topics in order to build this dataset.

1 *Social typology of the countryside*

Researchers often contrast ‘the countryside’ with ‘the city’; this also happens in The Social State of the Countryside. However, wide differences exist within the countryside. In order to portray those differences, a social typology was constructed in which the more than 2,000 rural postcode areas in the Netherlands were subdivided into five types.

- The closed countryside consists of small, isolated villages with limited amenities. Compared with the residents of other rural categories, the people in these small communities tend to be focused inwards. Few city-dwellers come to live in these villages and the residents have a relatively low income and education level. A third of all rural dwellers live in the closed countryside.
- The village countryside comprises larger villages which function as centres of activity. These villages have many amenities and receive many external visitors. New residents mainly come from the local region. More than half of all rural dwellers live here.
- The residential countryside consists of outlying districts and hamlets in an agricultural setting. Many families live here, with a few older people, and most residents have an above-average income and education level. 5% of rural dwellers live in postcode areas in the ‘residential countryside’ category.
- The elite countryside consists of attractive areas with a relatively high proportion of natural landscape and a central location relative to towns and cities. This desirable combination attracts residents who are well-to-do and well educated and who have a strong orientation towards the city. 4% of rural dwellers live in the ‘elite countryside’.
- The urban countryside mainly consists of residential developments. The relatively cheap homes attract a population that includes a high proportion of young people and families and, for the countryside, a high proportion of members of non-Western ethnic minorities. 6% of all rural dwellers in the Netherlands live in the ‘urban countryside’; only a third of them actually consider themselves as living in the countryside.

2 *Close-knit village community?*

How realistic is the perception of close-knit local communities in the Dutch countryside? In this study we used a number of indicators to explore the degree of social cohesion in the different types of countryside identified. First is the social cohesion at neighbourhood level. Rural dwellers reported to a greater extent than city-dwellers that people in the same immediate neighbourhood know each other and greet each other when they meet, and that they expect neighbours to help each other when necessary and join forces to act to prevent potential nuisance or problems. The ‘closed countryside’ scores highest in this regard and the ‘urban countryside’ forms the exception.

We then looked at the individual social networks. In line with the image of the close-knit village community, the networks of rural dwellers – with the exception of residents of the elite and urban countryside – are slightly more focused on the local residential setting: a higher proportion of network members live within a radius of one kilometre. Moreover, rural dwellers have contact with members of their local network slightly more often than city-dwellers.

In other respects, the picture of a close-knit rural community is not confirmed. Country life is often characterised as ‘insiders sticking together’, and this is reflected in the network density. In reality, with the exception of those living in the residential countryside and the urban countryside, the networks of rural dwellers are slightly less dense than those in the city. This means that the members of rural networks know each other slightly less often than members of urban networks. Also contrary to the prevailing image, the relationships of rural dwellers, with the exception of residents of the elite countryside, are less multiple than those of city-dwellers. This means that city-dwellers more often fulfil several functions for each other than village-dwellers. Among rural dwellers, the relationships are often limited to providing practical help, whereas members of urban networks more often also provide each other with emotional support.

Although rural dwellers are slightly more focused on the local community than city-dwellers, therefore, the latter form somewhat closer ties with the people who are important to them. One possible explanation for this may be that the relationships of city-dwellers are selected to a greater extent than those of rural dwellers from a wide range of possibilities, that those engaged in these relationships are therefore better suited to each other and that the relationships are consequently deeper and able to cover more areas of life. The fact that city-dwellers live in less close-knit neighbourhoods may also contribute to the closeness of their personal networks. Where rural dwellers are able to call on their neighbours for many things, city-dwellers are forced to rely more on friends and relatives.

Finally, the study looked at the size of people’s personal networks. There was no clear expectation in this regard, and no differences were found between city-dwellers and residents of the different types of countryside.

3 *Quality of life in the countryside?*

A countryside that offers quality of life is one where residents are able to live in contentment and where problems, worries and irritations are limited and do not constantly recur. A major cause of concern in this connection is the absence of amenities. Without things such as shops, cafes/bars, libraries and doctors, people have to travel long distances to meet their needs. In fact, our study showed that residents of the ‘closed’ and ‘village’ countryside experience fewer problems with transport than city-dwellers. Rural dwellers more often have a car, enabling them to cover greater distances easily. They are much less confronted with traffic jams and parking problems than city-dwellers.

One frequently feared consequence of the small number of meeting places available to rural dwellers in their residential setting is loneliness. Here too, however, our study found no indications of this. In fact, with the exception of the urban countryside, rural dwellers were found to be significantly less lonely than city-dwellers. Moreover, again with the exception of the urban countryside, they feel happier and safer than city-dwellers and are relatively satisfied with their residential environment. The general pattern with regard to the quality of life of the countryside is thus a clearly positive one, with the urban countryside forming an exception. However, the statistical correlations are weak; we are not in dealing with sharp contrasts here, but with differences of gradation.

This positive outcome regarding the quality of life of the countryside shows a clear correlation with the social cohesion in the neighbourhood and different indicators of quality of life. Residents of neighbourhoods where people know each other, greet each other in the street and work on behalf of the neighbourhood, experience fewer problems with transport and feel less lonely; they are also more satisfied with their residential setting and are happier. A close-knit neighbourhood thus also functions as a social safety net. The other aspects of social cohesion were found to produce much more limited benefits for quality of life.

The high proportion of residents living with a (marriage) partner also contributes to the perceived quality of life of the countryside. Married couples and cohabiting partners score higher on various indicators – they are for example less lonely and happier than people living alone – and because this group is relatively sizeable in the countryside, the countryside comes across as being a more ‘liveable’ environment than the city.

People with physical disabilities emerged as a group who are worse off on all fronts in the countryside than people without disabilities. Life in the cities is no better for the disabled, but there is perhaps a hope that the assumed caring rural community might make life more pleasant for these people than in the city. This is found not to be the case. Members of non-Western ethnic minorities also have a relatively difficult time of it – though it should be pointed out here that these findings are based on a small and perhaps fairly unrepresentative group of members of ethnic minorities, and should therefore be interpreted with caution. According to this study, members of non-Western ethnic minorities only experience more difficulties in the countryside than the indigenous population when it comes to transport, probably because they are forced to rely on public transport more than the indigenous population. Non-Western ethnic minorities also feel less happy and safe than the indigenous population, though again this only applies for the countryside. It is quite plausible that the unsafe feelings may be caused by a closed and negative attitude on the part of other rural dwellers; non-Western ethnic minorities living in the countryside are also likely to feel social stigmatisation more keenly, because they do not have their own ethnic group on which to fall back.

A vital countryside is a countryside where residents put themselves out for each other and their environment, but is also a countryside where new groups of residents feel they belong and where people know how to find their way to official bodies and policymakers, so that new initiatives can get off the ground. There is a widespread perception that rural dwellers adopt an active and committed approach to their residential setting. This perception received partial support in our study. We found that more rural dwellers than city-dwellers are members of a religious community and that rural dwellers are also the most faithful churchgoers of the members of those religious communities. Residents of the closed and village countryside were found to be particularly active church members; by contrast, we found few active church members among the residents of the elite countryside.

Rural dwellers are also more often members of a club or association and are more often actively involved in voluntary work, whereas urban members visit their clubs/associations more frequently than their counterparts in the countryside, and urban volunteers perform voluntary work more often than rural volunteers. If we look only at active volunteers and association members, we see no differences between city and countryside; it is only in the residential countryside that the proportion of volunteers stands out. We also found no differences between the city and the different types of countryside as regards the provision of informal care.

With the exception of residents of the elite countryside, rural dwellers were found to participate to a substantially greater extent in local cultural traditions. In particular, residents of the closed countryside participate actively in traditions; they set themselves apart mainly through the use of the local dialect. Although most of the variables studied showed only a very weak correlation with the types of residential setting studied, participation in local traditions was found to produce the greatest differentiation; this applied in particular for the use of local dialect.

There is also a general perception that rural dwellers have a closed, conservative attitude to life which, it is thought, could stifle initiative and hold back the development of rural communities. This perception was partly supported and partly contradicted by the study. City-dwellers and rural dwellers display a comparable attitude to politics; both groups have as much (or as little) confidence in their ability to influence their municipal and national political representatives; only with respect to provincial politics do rural dwellers feel slightly less remote. Most rural dwellers have a moderately positive attitude to new residents in their neighbourhood. Although a majority believe that new residents have little need for contact, fewer than a quarter believe they pose a threat to the social ties in the village community. The attitude of rural dwellers to ethnic minorities is however considerably more closed than that of city-dwellers, but only in the village and (especially) the closed countryside. Few members of ethnic minorities live in these areas, and it may therefore be that the closed attitude is attributable to lack of familiarity.

To what extent do the aspects of social vitality described above ensue from social cohesion? The contributions that people make to the social vitality of a community are found to correlate mainly with the size of their individual networks. People with a large network more often participate in associational life, more often work as volunteers and more often provide informal care than people with smaller networks. They are also more open to new residents and ethnic minorities and take a positive view of their influence over politics, which could mean they are more likely to take initiatives, for example on behalf of their community. It is thus the people with a large network who make a key contribution to the emergence and continued existence of civil society in their village or neighbourhood and who consequently represent the social capital. No differences were found in the average size of the networks of city-dwellers and residents of the different types of countryside, which means that this form of social capital is equally distributed.

The different forms of social vitality are supported within different population groups. Beginning with the traditional, cohesive forms of social vitality: religious communities and clubs/associations are highly popular among both older and younger people, and people who are married or living together also frequently participate in these activities. Voluntary work relies heavily on people without paid jobs; they are more often active as volunteers, and when they are active, they are active more often. Informal care falls mainly on the shoulders of women. The increased labour market participation rate of women is often seen as a threat to the social vitality of the countryside, and there is some justification for this. Organisations which are dependent on volunteers, in particular, have to rely mainly on people who are not in paid work, and if the number of those people shrinks, the potential volunteer pool also shrinks. As women work more, they have less time to provide informal care. By contrast, older people are often active and it may be that in this regard population ageing can be seen as a blessing in disguise. The activities of the over-65s are however largely limited to participation in church and associational life. It may be that voluntary work and informal care are too demanding, because these activities are performed mainly by people who are still of working age. The rising education level of the population may provide a solution here, because better educated people are more active as members of associations and as volunteers.

The picture is quite different when it comes to local cultural traditions. It is mainly original residents and people with a low education level who participate actively in these traditions, and who therefore contribute to sustaining them. The supporting base for this appears to be diminishing with the arrival of new residents and rising education levels. However, this applies to a greater extent for the use of local dialect and for things such as putting up the flag and the local eating culture or festivities with historical significance, something for which target groups also exist outside the local community.

If we look at forms of social vitality which are not so much of importance for tradition as for renewal, we see that the better educated and new residents can play an important role. They tend to have a more open attitude to ethnic minorities and a

great deal of confidence in their own ability to influence politics. This produces little if the new residents are not willing to invest in the local community, but in practice they tend to do so .

5 *Worlds of difference?*

Taking the results of this study together, the following picture emerges of the different types of countryside:

- Life in the closed countryside is good and traditional. Many residents are members of a religious community and take part in local cultural traditions. The degree of social cohesion in the community is also high and residents feel safe, happy and rarely feel lonely. They have a closed attitude to ethnic minorities, though there are hardly any of them.
- In many respects, the village countryside is comparable with the closed countryside, except that the scale is larger and the characteristics are somewhat less pronounced. Church membership is high, people often take part in local cultural traditions, the social cohesion between neighbours is high and people feel safe, but all to a slightly lesser extent than those living in the closed countryside.
- The residential countryside also shows many correspondences with the closed and village countryside. Residents are happy and content, often work as volunteers and feel a strong sense of solidarity with their neighbours. The local cultural traditions are also very much alive. The main differences are that the residents are less ethnocentric and have more confidence in their influence over politicians.
- The elite countryside presents a distinctly different picture; residents are less traditional and less oriented towards the local community than other rural dwellers. They take part in cultural traditions just as little as city-dwellers and the number of active church members is actually lower than in the cities. They are less ethnocentric and their social networks are outwardly focused. The elite countryside would therefore appear to be less socially vital in the traditional sense, but those living there are doing very well; they are certainly no less content with their residential setting and no less happy than residents of other countryside types. Moreover, they most definitely experience a strong sense of cohesion in their neighbourhood.
- The urban countryside also presents a different picture from the more typical patterns found in the closed, village and residential countryside types. Social cohesion in the community is low and a relatively high proportion of residents feel lonely, unsafe or fairly unhappy. Despite this, they are just as satisfied with their residential setting as residents of the other countryside types. Although there are slightly fewer volunteers than elsewhere, people actively participate in local cultural traditions and are not highly ethnocentric.

The correlations between the different residential settings on the one hand and the indicators of quality of life, social vitality and social cohesion on the other were

generally found to be weak. It cannot therefore be said that there are worlds of difference in this respect. This is perhaps not really surprising. Those living in the present-day Dutch countryside are in contact with the world outside their immediate residential setting in all kinds of ways, and that world creates a powerful common framework. In addition, differences that do exist are often blurred by the virtually unavoidable use of the sometimes heterogeneous four-digit postcode areas used as the unit of analysis in this study. This does not however alter the fact that differences within the countryside need to be monitored in research. Now that many rural villages are developing from autonomous entities into purely residential villages, while at the same time the recreational function is becoming more important, villages are becoming increasingly dependent upon their landscape, cultural/historical and geographical 'selling points'. Since the countryside is still highly diverse in these respects, the social differences could increase in the future.

Report on Sport 2008¹

Koen Breedveld, Carlijn Kamphuis and Annet Tiessen-Raaphorst

1 Introduction

This *Report on Sport 2008* (*Rapportage sport 2008*) brings together the main statistical trends in sport in the Netherlands in the recent period 2003-2008. Special attention is devoted to the importance of exercise for health, the rise of the fitness culture and the collaboration between sport and education. The *Report on Sport 2008* is a co-production by the Netherlands Instituted for Social Research/SCP, the Mulier Institute, Statistics Netherlands (CBS), the National Olympic Committee * Netherlands Sports Federation (NOC*NSF) and TNO Quality of Life. In addition, some chapters were written in full or in part by staff from various universities (Utrecht, Tilburg, Amsterdam and VU University Amsterdam), DSP-groep, the Netherlands Institute for Transport Policy Analysis (KIM) and the Dutch Consumer Protection Council (Consument en Veiligheid). The *Report on Sport* is funded partly by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

2 Social trends

Some social trends in recent years have been beneficial for sport, others less so. One positive factor has been the further increase in the general education level. Disposable incomes were also higher in 2007 than in 2005, when purchasing power reached its lowest point to date in the new millennium. Perhaps less favourable was the fact that the average Dutch person's life became slightly busier; the total time spent on obligatory activities increased by 0.4 hours per week between 2000 and 2005, while the amount of free time people had at their disposal remained stable. The trend towards spending less and less time on maintaining social contacts has also continued in recent years. Fewer people join clubs and associations. In the long term, the health-related behaviour of the Dutch has improved; in the last few years, however, this progress appears to have come to a halt. In 2007, for example, there were just as many regular alcohol users and just as many smokers as in 2004. The percentage of overweight Dutch people has also changed little.

3 *Developments in the policy on sport*

The development of the sports policy network, the division of roles and tasks among the various partners in this network, and thus the design and direction of the policy, have developed further in recent years in line with the investment scenario. This means that partners in the sports policy network have become less dependent on government subsidies and concentrate on finding or creating their own niche in the network. The increased funds flows within sport and the growing instrumental importance attached to this money is making the demand for effectiveness ever more urgent. The quantifying of policy objectives and the monitoring of results means the achievement of policy targets is increasingly being tested.

The decentralisation of central government tasks affords local authorities the opportunity to adopt a more integrated approach to sport and exercise, education, welfare, youth policy and health policy. The paradoxical effect of this is that it makes the policy on sport less transparent and uniform.

The government policy memorandum *Tijd voor Sport* (Time for Sport) was published in 2005 and was based on three core themes, namely 'exercise', 'taking part' and 'performance'. These still form the basis for government policy. Exercise is gaining importance in the battle against overweight; taking part fits in seamlessly with the goals of the fourth government under Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende; and performing and excelling are once again deemed acceptable. In order to realise the envisaged gains through sport, great efforts are being made to create healthy, well-equipped sports associations and clubs. A good deal of effort is being invested in encouraging participation in sport, i.e. stimulating the demand side of the sports market. However, this means that scant attention is devoted to the supply-side, especially sports facilities. One problem here is that the costs are borne by parties (local authorities) which receive few if any of the benefits of those investments (which accrue directly to businesses, health insurers and central government). A similar problem surrounds the funding of the organised sports infrastructure. Whether or not the government should be making a contribution here, in order to guarantee the achievement of gains ('sport as a means') into the future, is open to question.

The thrust of the NOC*NSF report on sport in the Netherlands (*Nederland sportland*) has in recent years become linked to the debate on the organisation of the Olympic Games in the Netherlands. That organisation demands the development of a geographical/economic vision of the Netherlands, in which a key place is accorded to the development of (conference) tourism, the leisure economy and the organisation of large-scale sports and other events.

4 *Participation in sport*

More people are taking part in sport in the Netherlands than ever before: 71% of the population participated in sport at least once in 2007, compared with 53% at the end of the 1970s. Moreover, 65% of the population were taking part in sport at least 12

times per year in 2007, compared with 61% in 2003. Participation in sport by members of non-Western ethnic minorities is lower than in the rest of the population, and the participation by the over-65s, people with a lower education level, lower income groups and people with moderate to severe impairments is still much lower than among the population as a whole.

There was a further decline between 2003 and 2007 in the proportion of the population who participate in sport as members of a sports club. Organised sport is thus continuing to lose market share. On the other hand, the proportion of people taking part in sports competitions and training sessions stabilised. The existing differences in participation in competitions and training sessions between men and women and between younger and older sports participants have not reduced. Sports which have seen further growth in recent years are particularly fitness training, running and soccer.

5 Sports fans

Sports magazines had a core paid circulation of 1.5 million copies in 2007. In the same year, Dutch public and commercial broadcasters dedicated an average of more than 2,800 hours to sport. People spend an average of 87 hours watching sport broadcast on the Dutch public and commercial channels. One in three Dutch people attend a sporting match at least once a year.

Attending matches is becoming more and more popular. By contrast, the following of sport via radio and television appears to be dwindling. It may be that more people now follow sport via the Internet; on the other hand, it is also possible that people are experiencing a degree of 'sport fatigue'. The enormous number of sports programmes broadcast has made following matches on the television less of a special event. Whether this reduced interest in following sport on radio and television marks the start of a new trend or is merely a temporary dip is a question that will have to be answered in the coming years.

6 Sports infrastructure

Although participation in sport is still growing, the number of sports facilities is failing to keep pace or is even falling back in relative terms. The main areas of growth are in the number of Cruijff Courts (playing fields established in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, sponsored by the Johan Cruijff Foundation; several of these have been established in the Netherlands, and recently a Cruijff Court was opened in Islington, London) and Krajicek playgrounds (a similar project involving the creation of sports fields and playgrounds for young people in disadvantaged areas, sponsored by the Richard Krajicek Foundation), and commercial sports organisations (riding schools, sports academies, fitness centres). The trend away from local authority-run

towards privately operated sports facilities came to a halt or even reversed slightly between 2003 and 2006.

The top 15 NOC*NSF sports associations have remained fairly stable for several years. One change that has however taken place is that, after the Dutch Football Association (KNVB) and the Dutch Lawn Tennis Association (KNLTB), in first and second place, respectively, the Dutch Golf Federation (NGF) is now in third place, having displaced the Royal Dutch Gymnastics Federation (KNGU). Among the sports that have seen strong growth in memberships in recent years are athletics, hockey and equestrian sports. Almost 27,000 sports clubs were affiliated to the sports federations in 2007 (a reduction of 1% compared with 2004). The average number of members rose during that period from 174 to 190 per club. 9% of sports clubs had 500 members or more in 2006; one in three sports clubs had fewer than 50 members.

Roughly 1.5 million people perform voluntary work within sport. This figure is fairly stable, though the most recent measurements suggest a slight decline in the number of volunteers in the population at large. Sport volunteers are more often men than women, and more often young than old. They are also generally better educated, come from the higher income groups and are indigenous Dutch. Volunteers are active at 84% of sports clubs. The total amount of unpaid work carried out in the sports sector is equivalent to 52,000 FTE.

7 Economics of sport

Consumer spending on sport fell from € 3.7 billion in 2003 to € 3.5 billion in 2006. Government spending on sport increased over the same period by 14%, to over € 1 billion. As in earlier years, spending allocated to sports clubs increased slightly more quickly than spending on sports halls and facilities. Further funding came from lotteries, which in 2006 generated more than € 44 million for sport.

The combined revenues of sports clubs (excluding water sports clubs and professional football) increased to € 1.1 billion between 2003 and 2006 (+16%). More than half the income and expenditure was attributable to clubs in just three branches of sport: amateur football, tennis and golf. Subsidies and government grants constituted 11% of the income of sports clubs in 2006. Without this income, the clubs would have operated at a deficit of € 80 million, as they did in 2003. The combined turnover of all sports organisations together (including commercial sports organisations and professional football) totalled € 2.9 billion in 2006 (2003: € 2.3 billion). This figure includes turnover in the fitness segment (€ 840 million in 2007, € 630 million in 2003).

Commercial and non-commercial sports organisations (excluding fitness centres) employed a total of 22,000 people in 2006 (an increase of 1,000 compared with 2003). The volume of labour increased by 9% over the same period to just under 9,000 full-time equivalents. The volume of labour of staff not on the payroll (e.g. owners/managing directors, temporary agency staff) grew by 23% over the same period, to 4,500 full-time equivalents. Together with the volume of labour of staff on the payroll and

employment at fitness centres (11,600 FTE, see chapter 14), this implies that 25,100 FTE were employed at sports organisations in 2006. To this can be added the staff at facilities such as swimming pools and yachting marinas: 8,720 FTE for staff on the payroll (a reduction of 8% compared with 2003) and 1,850 FTE for non-payroll staff (-3%).

8 *Sport, space and time*

The total area available for sport in the Netherlands increased slightly between 1996 and 2003, from 31,000 to 32,000 ha. Open-air sports facilities occupy less than 1% of the total area of the Netherlands. The trend towards moving open air sports facilities out of central urban areas to peripheral municipalities, which has been under way for some time, has continued in recent years. Residents of these peripheral municipalities relatively frequently practise sport in a green environment. Land prices near to sports fields are relatively high, possibly suggesting that the presence of sports fields has a positive influence on land values.

More than one in ten leisure journeys can be traced to sporting activities. A large majority of all sports-related journeys (60%) are however shorter than 5 km. Even more striking is the (continuing) domination of the car in sport-related journeys, even over short distances.

Sport remains an activity predominantly for the evenings and weekends: 69% of participation in sport takes place at these times, and when it comes to attending matches the figure is even higher, at 94%. The routine of the working day means that sport and associational life only really get going after 5.00 p.m. This offers opportunities for utilising empty sports facilities during work and school hours, but also implies that paid staff would have to be recruited for all manner of tasks, since at these times volunteers are engaged in other activities.

9 *Sport, exercise and health*

Adult exercise patterns are improving in the Netherlands; the proportion of Dutch people who are inactive has fallen from 9% to 5% in recent years. The proportion of Dutch people who exercise in accordance with the 'combinorm' – the norm amount of exercise that is required to maintain good health – increased from 52% in 2002 to almost 66% in 2006/07. However, detailed figures on the exercise patterns of the adult population do not yet confirm this positive trend. Those who participate in sport score better across the board than those who do not. A further point for attention is that the percentage of people achieving the fitness exercise norm appears to be falling slightly. The percentage of people who meet the norm is considerably lower among 12-17 year-olds than among adults. The percentage of young people meeting the exercise norm of 60 minutes is 38%.

On average, there are at least 1.5 million sports-related injuries in the Netherlands each year. Half of these require medical treatment. The possibility cannot however be ruled out that the actual number of injuries is even higher.

There is growing evidence that physically demanding forms of exercise, such as sport, have a greater (positive) effect on health than less intensive forms of physical activity. This means that there is a need when encouraging exercise to stress that in order to achieve the maximum effect, it is important to participate in more intensive forms of physical activity, such as sport.

10 Sport and education

Primary school pupils receive an average of 90 minutes physical exercise instruction each week, while in secondary schools between 2 and 2.5 hours per week are devoted to this. Around half of all primary schools employ a specialist physical education teacher. They work mainly with the more senior years and are found mainly at larger schools and at primary schools in the Randstad conurbation (the densely populated region in the west of the Netherlands incorporating the four largest cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht). Physical education is not regarded a priority in senior secondary vocational education.

The position as regards the ability of Dutch children to swim is not bad; 55% of all 6-7 year-olds and 96% of 11-15 year-olds have attained at least one swimming certificate. Compared with 2003, there has been no change in the overall attainment of swimming diplomas among all children aged between 6 and 15 years, though there has been an increase in the number of children holding the more advanced C-diploma.

There has been a marked increase in the interest in sports education courses in recent years. A number of new courses have been introduced and the number of students is growing, both at senior secondary vocational level and at higher professional and university level. There are some concerns about the labour market position of those graduating from senior secondary vocational sports training courses; however, many of these students go on to further education or branch out to sectors other than the sport sector. One negative aspect is the often limited opportunity for full-time employment for graduates in sports disciplines. Pooling hours between schools and expanding the range of tasks to create combination posts could offer a solution here.

11 Elite sports

The investments in elite sport have increased since 2000. This has helped enable more elite sportsmen and women to practise their sport full-time, and has allowed sports federations to employ more top-class coaches and offer them better terms of employment. A majority of elite sports practitioners are themselves of the opinion that this policy has led to further improvements in the climate surrounding elite

sport in recent years. There are however still problems. For example, older elite sports practitioners, in particular, face financial problems precisely because they have begun practising sport full-time. In the longer term it is likely that the improvement in the climate in elite sport will lead to more success. The ambition of being among the top 10 countries in the world has not yet been achieved, but the Netherlands is close to doing so.

Developments in recent years show that it is difficult to continue improving the level of performance relative to other countries. The competition also pushes up investments. In the light of the ambition of the sports organisations and the Dutch government to put the Netherlands in the world top 10, these international developments put pressure on the Netherlands to increase the spending on elite sport and to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of those investments. A related question here is whether the Netherlands should focus on diversity or on specific priorities. It would seem that more money is spent on diversity in the Netherlands than in other countries, though it remains the case that 91% of all Dutch Olympic medals between 1948 and 2008 have been achieved in just nine branches of sport.

12 *Medical costs of insufficient exercise*

A lifestyle which contains insufficient physical activity has an impact on health care costs. Although the percentage of people meeting the combinorm for exercise rose between 2004 and 2007, the health-related costs attributable to sub-norm activity levels rose over the same period from € 744 million to € 907 million. A key explanation for this increase are the increased fees in the health care sector. The annual medical costs directly attributable to sports injuries in the Netherlands are estimated at € 230 million. The biggest cost item, € 70 million, is accounted for by physiotherapists.

If the costs of health care caused by sub-norm physical activity (€ 907 million) are set against the cost savings due to absence of sports injuries (€ 230 million), this results in a total of € 677 million per year. Investing in exercise policy thus not only involves costs, but also generates significant revenues.

13 *Collaboration between schools and sport*

There is wide public interest in projects at the interface of education and sport. National incentives and projects ('Young people on the move' (Jeugd in beweging), BSI (Sport for All), BOS (Neighbourhood, Education, Sport)) have facilitated this collaboration. The socialisation of education and sport also plays an important role here, however; schools today are much more emphatically rooted in the local community, in everyday life. In this sense, the collaboration between schools and sport can be described as positive.

However, the effect of school and sports projects on the exercise patterns of young people as a whole is minimal. The collaboration between education and sport

enables young people to become acquainted with various branches of sport, but the limited scope of this collaboration and its ad hoc character means it makes virtually no contribution to the creation of new, supplementary sports opportunities for those who are currently inactive, nor to extra opportunities for those pupils already participating in sport. Moreover, the collaborating partners (e.g. schools and sports clubs) do not themselves always see the benefits of the collaboration, or they perceive too many barriers to engaging in it (no time, no volunteers, etc.). It remains to be seen to what extent the collaboration between schools and sport will have a positive impact over the long term, and to what extent it encourages sport among the young.

14 *The fitness industry in the Netherlands*

The Dutch fitness sector is developing rapidly to a fully fledged service industry in the fields of sport, exercise and health. More than two million Dutch people practise sport at one of the 2,000 fitness centres throughout the country. Together, these centres generate turnover of around € 840 million per year and provide employment for 26,000 people, or 11,600 FTE.

Fitness companies are increasingly being acknowledged by health insurers and central government as partners in the policy for (preventive) healthcare and encouraging sport. The growing interest in health, both among the population and from the perspective of policy and related sectors (wellness, hospitality industry, leisure) is likely to generate further growth in the sector. However, the competition in the fitness market, too, appears to be increasing. It remains to be seen whether the market will become saturated in the near future and turn into a strong displacement market. What is in any event likely is that the desire to participate actively in sport will grow further, even in an ageing population.

15 *Epilogue*

Sport is showing more and more signs of being a genuine, mature sector of industry. The developments taking place in sport are illustrative of the changes in the leisure industry as a whole. Generous sponsors, entrepreneurial providers of sports amenities, health-conscious sports consumers and expansionist media have all helped sport to raise its game to a new level. Politicians and policymakers sing the praises of sport as a means of contributing to improved public health and social cohesion. If it is assumed that these trends will continue in the coming years, then the future for sport seems to be a very healthy one. The main threat appears to stem from the recent financial crisis, with the concomitant uncertainty as to how much this will affect the economy in the next few years. On another note, the recent increases in participation in sport suggest that there may be a good deal of as yet undiscovered potential. The prospect of one day bringing the Olympic Games back to the Netherlands is a powerful stimulus for asking that attention (and money) be ploughed into investments in sport across the full spectrum. At the same time, the

challenge facing sport is to channel the processes of commercialisation and professionalisation smoothly and successfully. There is no doubting the fact that sports federations, associations and clubs will play a key role in the sports landscape of the future. Precisely what that role will be and who will fulfil which key tasks in it, is by contrast still open for debate.

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